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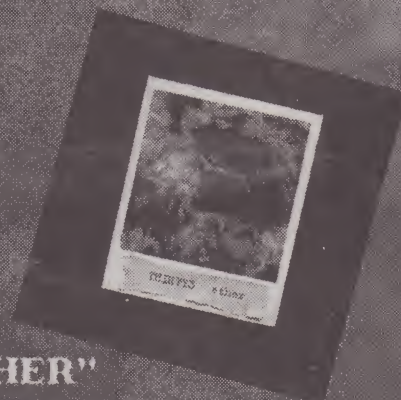
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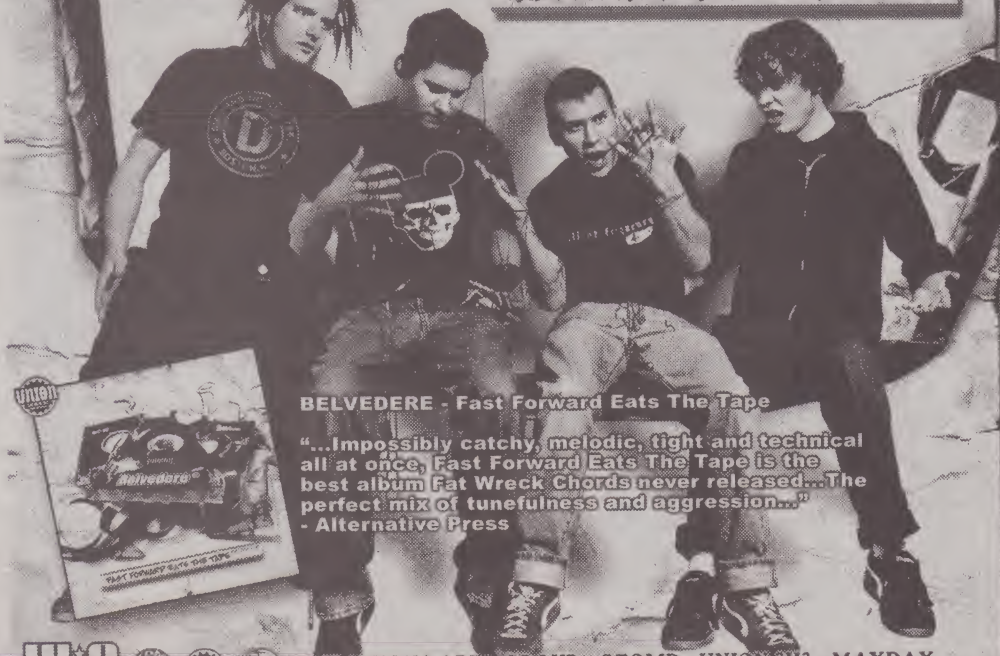
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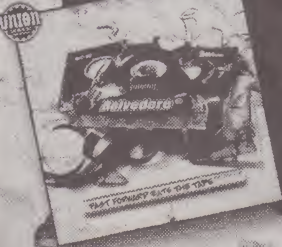
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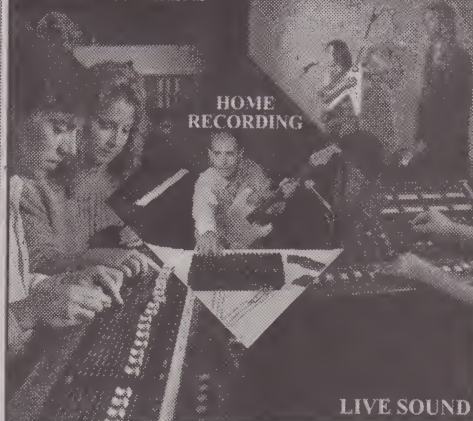
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This training program was created and is taught by legendary engineer/producer Peter Miller (aka Big Boy Pete), who was responsible for engineering hundreds of bands including The Avengers, Crucifix, Christ on Parade, Defeatist Attitude, Faction, Frank Discussion, Mary Monday, The Hellbillys, Pink Section, Faith No More, Pushead, Sceptic Death, Social Unrest, Samiam, Sleepers, Tuxedomoon, Voice Farm, Attitude Adjustment. (Pete also toured with The Beatles and the Stones).

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WORD ON THE STREET

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Cave In and RCA are splitsville.

Cave In have finally announced their split with RCA. This confirms rumours that have been floating around for months. Frontman Stephen Brodsky spoke about their label situation: "We're free agents. We haven't decided on a label for our next album." and the upcoming album status, Brodsky says that they are "two or three songs away from having a solid record." The band released only one record via the BMG imprint, 2003's *Antenna* which recieved favorable reviews but never really broke out.

Motorhead / Zeke tour cancelled

The upcoming Motorhead / Zeke tour has been cancelled following an unattended foot injury suffered by Motorhead vocalist / bassist Lemmy Kilminster. According to the band's website: "Lemmy, ignoring the pain and against his European doctor's recommendation, completed the few remaining shows on the Motorhead summer festival tour. Since he was not able to rest his foot for a while, Lemmy's injury worsened, and his U.S. doctor insisted in no uncertain terms that Lemmy stay off his foot for several weeks in order for it to heal properly." The tour is being rescheduled for March 2005.

New Paint It Black record in spring '05

Paint It Black has finished recording their sophomore album. It's due early next year from Jade Tree:

So late last night or early this morning depending on how you look at it and where you live, the tight-fisted troublemakers in PAINT IT BLACK finished recording their follow up to last years stunning debut, *CVA LP/CD (JT1080)*. Scheduled for a spring release the as-of-now untitled record promises all of the bombast of the last joint coupled with Dan Yemin's rant & roll exploration of the personal pains of divorce, the more global concerns of war and how the two are hopelessly intertwined. The end result was recorded by producer extraordinaire J. Robbins, and features guest vocals from both Jason Yawn of TRIAL BY FIRE & former PAINT IT BLACK member Dave Hause who's currently getting his kicks with The Loved Ones.

Lawrence Arms B-sides record coming from Asian Man

The Lawrence Arms have updated their website upon their return from tour with bands like Pipedown, Tsunami Bomb and Scattered Fall. They've announced an upcoming b-sides record

to be released on Asian Man Records:

So, we are back in town, relaxing and looking forward to not touring for a while. Now, remember before when I told you that we would still be recording and playing shows and stuff? Good. Because we have a show in Evanston, IL in the beginning of October. Also, we are going to be compiling our split EPs and some other various shit (as well as some new recordings of old songs and a new song or two) for a B-sides collection that will be coming out sometime on Asian Man Records.

MxPx Signs to SideOneDummy / Early 2005 Releases

SideOneDummy Records has signed MxPx. The label plans on releasing a DVD from the band in November titled "B-Movie," which will have a "life on the road" theme, and be "filled with all kinds of cool stuff including a five-song acoustic EP." The band will then head into the studio to start work on their first full-length for SideOneDummy, which will be out sometime next year.

In other SideOneDummy news, the label will be releasing in early 2005 the new 7 Seconds and Kill Your Idols albums, as well as the third volume in the ATTICUS...Dragging the Lake series, and the new Punx Unite compilation, which will feature bands from the upcoming Punx Unite Tour with The Casualties and Lower Class Brats.

Nirvana boxed set due in November

Billboard is reporting that Universal will release a three CD boxed set from Nirvana on November 23rd. Limited editions of the release will include a DVD that includes footage of the band playing at a 1987 house party. No track list has been announced yet but the set is expected to contain a wealth of previously unreleased material. Pitchfork has some interesting speculations online in regards to the content.

This set was originally scheduled for a Christmas 2001 release to coincide with the 10 year anniversary Nevermind, however Dave Grohl and Krist Novoselic's efforts were thwarted by a very public legal battle with Cobain's widow Courtney Love.

Joe Strummer, Patti Smith, Weakerthans make the Longlist

Joe Strummer & The Mescaleros, Patti Smith, The Weakerthans, The Killers, AC Newman, Neil Young and Non Prophets are among the 73

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News is contributed by hundreds of readers, and industry insiders, as well as bands, friends, angry ex-girlfriends, angry ex-boyfriends, animals (hypothetically) and well-wishers of all races, cultures and anthropomorphic persuasions.

News Briefs

- Every New Day signs to Hand of Hope
- Geoff Kresge leaves Tiger Army
- Gym Class Heroes sign with Fueled By Ramen
- Pelado forms Nervous Breakdown Records, signs Fail to Follow
- Bad Taste Records signs Quit Your Dayjob
- Divide By Zero loses Drummer
- Turbonegro in the studio soon
- Adam Becvare joins The Black Halos
- Downloadpunk.com Launched
- Chase Pagan recording debut for I Am Recordings
- Cartel signs to The Militia Group
- New Queens album by the end of the year
- Bridge Nine signs Death Before Dishonor
- Expanded Pavement reissue in October
- Gearhead Records signs the Million Dollar Marxists
- Hot Water Music to release 7" on No Idea
- Blue Meanies playing shows in December
- The Tokyo Smash (ex-As I Lay Dying/The Agony Scene) to release debut EP

- Comeback Kid recording with Bill Stevenson
- Punkcore signs Blood Or Whiskey
- Love Equals Death on the road supporting new EP
- No Idea to release This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb LP
- Live New York Dolls album out in September
- Punknews.org surpasses 10,000 stories
- Eyeball signs The Feverfew
- Mustard Plug DVD in the works
- A Trunk Full Of Dead Bodies break up
- New Electric Frankenstein EP on VMS Records
- The Militia Group signs Denison Witmer
- Some signs Earl Greyhound
- Kelowna's Cry of the Afflicted Signs with Ethics Industries
- Millencolin in studio
- MxPx DVD in the works
- Annalise and J Church reissues on the way
- Pulley recording Minor Threat covers for split with The Slackers
- Paul Westerberg, Tommy Stinson prep new solo releases
- New Gimmie Gimmies record, Against Me! DVD this fall on Fat
- ZZZZ sign to Polyvinyl Records
- Vagrant signs Emanuel
- Anti-Flag in major label bidding war
- Pitch Black recording sophomore release
- Red City Anthem sign to Triple Threat
- Eyeball signs Jett Brando
- New album from The Mars Volta
- Propagandhi in the studio this November
- The Banner signs to Ferret Music
- Patti Smith and Television playing in NYC
- G7 to release new Submission Hold record
- Fordirelifesake loses guitarist to Boys Night Out, looking for replacement
- Negative Progression signs Little Compass
- Watashi Wa calls it quits
- Halifax signs to Drive-Thru
- Darkbuster frontman completes Lenny and the Piss Poor Boys recordings
- Lucero recording with Jim Dickinson
- Nasum sign to Burning Heart announce new album
- Shane MacGowan and The Pogues touring in December
- Hydra Head signs Big Business / Old Man Gloom out soon
- August Premier gets back together

artists whose latest albums have made the Longlist of initial nominations for the 2004 Shortlist Music Prize. The yearly award honors critically acclaimed albums that have not yet been certified gold.

Nominees are chosen by a panel of Listmakers which this year includes Robert Smith of The Cure, Queens Of The Stone Age's Josh Homme, System Of A Down's Serj Tankian and Chris Carrabba of Dashboard Confessional. The list will be narrowed down to 10 finalists by late September, with the winner to be crowned November 10 at the Wilshire Theater in Los Angeles.

Jade Tree signs The Loved Ones

Jade Tree Records has signed The Loved Ones. The band features Dave Hause of Paint It Black and formerly The Curse, Michael "Spider" Cottlerman of Kid Dynamite and Mike Sneeringer of Trial By Fire. There's no word yet on what their first release for the label will be.

Agnostic Front signs to Nuclear Blast

Legendary New York hardcore stalwarts Agnostic Front have signed to Nuclear Blast, joining a roster largely made up of metal bands including Death, and Meshuggah. The band released their last record on Epitaph titled Dead Yuppies, though vocalist Roger Miret released a side project on Hellcat in 2002. According to the band's website, the full length due out on Nuclear Blast is called Another Voice.

Stiv Bators' Disconnected to be re-released in September

In September Bomp! Records will be re-releasing the only solo album by late Dead Boys frontman Stiv Bators. This 25th anniversary edition of Disconnected has been remastered from the original tapes and contains added bonus tracks found by former band members. The original art for the release has been restored and a new 24-page booklet of liner notes has been compiled by bandmate Frank Secich. From the press release:

This seminal album marked the incestuous marriage of the best aspects of punk rock and '60s-style power pop. Many rank it among his most enduring accomplishments. There's no time like now to lend an ear to these timeless songs, whether you've known them before or not—they never sounded better. And while you're listening, read the vastly entertaining notes and join us in mourning the all-too-brief swath through the world of prosaic rock left by the incomparable, unforgettable Stiv Bators.

Zombie Apocalypse frontman starts non-profit organization

Zombie Apocalypse frontman and journalist Ronen Kauffman has started a nonprofit organization designed to explore and build links between music and the worlds of philanthropy and activism. The organization, called Secret Media Group, has a website at SecretMedia.org which contains information, resources, and feature articles.

The site currently spotlights Most Precious Blood and The A.K.A.s ñ both bands discuss what motivates them to get involved and stay active. SMG will be sponsoring a number of very cool charity auctions, starting this weekend with a 1st pressing copy of the Ugly Bill 7i, the very rare 1st record ever from the Bouncing Souls. The auction is sponsored in part by Chunksaah Records.

From Autumn To Ashes switch bassists

From Autumn To Ashes has announced that bassist Mike Pilato has left the band. Replacing him is former Shiner/Unsane/Reggie And The Full Effect bassist Josh Newton. The band recently wrapped up a video for "Lilacs And Lolita" with director Paul Brown, and are currently out on the road with Killswitch Engage through mid-September.

Time In Malta loses vocalist

Time in Malta has parted ways with vocalist Todd Gullion, who "has left the band on good terms in order to go back to school and pursue other personal goals." The band plans to begin auditioning new vocalists immediately. (Some may speculate that this had something to do with the band dropping off the Sick of It All / Champion tour.)

Jamie Woolford back with new songs

The former Animal Chin and front man of The Stereo is back in the studio working on a solo record. Demos from Jamie Woolford's upcoming project can be found at his pureVOLUME page.

One Man Army has broken up

BYO Records has confirmed the long running rumors that One Man Army has broken up. The band members have been involved in various projects in the last few months, with frontman Jack Dalrymple playing guitar for Swingin' Utters as well as the band Dead To Me with fellow OMA alumni Brandon Pollack. The label commented "We love OMA and wish them all well...keep your eyes out as there are also other rumors of what Jack, Heiko, and Chippy are up to these days!"

Transplants and My Chemical Romance confirmed for Warped 2005

According to, Warped Tour head honcho Kevin Lyman, in a summer touring season that has been marred by poor ticket sales and cancelled events (re: Lollapalooza), this was the most successful Warped Tour ever. The total attendance this year reached 650,000, up 20 percent from 2003.

At the show Lyman confirmed two bands for the 2005 edition of the tour: The Transplants and My Chemical Romance. About the Tim Armstrong side-project Lyman commented "I think they'll be amazing. They were so good on the last record, but they never really got to tour behind it. So their whole plan this year is to put out a record, and then play

it on the Warped Tour."

About the festival's longevity and success Lyman explained "The bottom line is we give value... We have a good brand that we don't mess with too much, and we don't overcharge the kids. There's no reason someone should be paying \$100, \$200, \$300 to see a show...We need to drop the guarantees. We need to deliver merchandise at a cheaper price. Our merch is about half of what other tours are charging. We need to get kids to see live music and experience it in a good environment."

Jello Biafra Drops Remaining Lawsuit Against Former Band

After six years of litigation, the lawsuit between former Dead Kennedy's vocalist Jello Biafra/Alternative Tentacles and the remaining members of the band has been dropped.

Dispute over final Joey Ramone recordings

NME is reporting that the family of Joey Ramone and producer Daniel Rey are in a dispute over the late Ramones frontman's final recordings. Joey's family have have accused Rey of refusing to hand over demos for 16 songs that Joey recorded before his death three years ago. The singer's brother Mickey Leigh spoke with the New York Post: "We've been trying to get Daniel to hand them back since Joey died. They don't belong to him." Rey, who played all the instruments on the demos, is quoted that he only wants "some sort of settlement" claiming "It has nothing to do with money. I'm just concerned with protecting Joey's musical legacy."

The article reports that the demos include a song titled "Party Line," that was planned to be a duet with Blondie frontwoman Debbie Harry and produced by Phil Spector. The first posthumous album from Joey was released in 2002, titled Don't Worry About Me.

Arthur Kane of the New York Dolls: 1949-2004

New York Dolls bassist Arthur "Killer" Kane died last night in Los Angeles due to complications from leukemia. He was 55. Kane is the fourth member of the pioneering act to pass away after Johnny Thunders, Billy Murcia and Jerry Nolan.

The reunited New York Dolls recently made a celebrated appearance at Morrissey's Meltdown Festival in London. The band is scheduled to headline Little Steven's International Underground Garage Festival next month in New York with the Stooges, no word on what will happen to those plans. They had also announced intentions of releasing a record for Morrissey's Attack imprint in September. A statement on the band's future from David Johansen is expected to clear up these uncertainties soon. Some photos from the reunion can be found at Bob Gruen's website.

There will be a public memorial held behind the Mormon Temple on 10777 Santa Monica Blvd on Saturday July 17 at 10:00 AM. Our deepest con-

dolences go out to the Kane's family, friends and fans.

Jimmy Eat World Sets Release Date, Streams Available

Jimmy Eat World has announced in a street team email that their new album is called Futures and it will be out on October 12th.

Anti- to release new Elliott Smith CD

Anti- Records, home to artists as diverse as The Locust and Tom Waits, has announced that they have completed a deal with the estate of fallen troubadour Elliott Smith to release his final album, From A Basement On The Hill. The 15-track album, completed by Smith before his 2003 death, will come out October 19th.

Barsuk to release Travis Morrison solo record

Barsuk Records has announced that they will be releasing the first solo record from former Dismemberment Plan frontman Travis Morrison. The record, called Travistan, will be out on September 28th. Morrison has posted a number of demo MP3s on his website over the past few months; no word if any of them will actually be on the record or not.

Geffen to release debut from Instruction [ex-Quicksand, Errortype:11, Garrison]

Geffen Records has announced that they will be releasing the first album from Instruction, entitled God Doesn't Care. Instruction is made up of Arty Shepherd [Errortype:11], Tom Capone [Quicksand, Handsome, Bold, Beyond], Adam Marino [Errortype:11, Saetia], Ti Kreck [Errortype:11] and Joe Grillo [Garrison]. This will be the band's major label debut, following two EPs on Gravity DIP Records released in 2003. God Doesn't Care will come out on August 24th.

Danzig, Doyle to perform Misfits songs this fall

Blabbermouth.net is reporting that Danzig will take Doyle out on the road as part of the fall lineup of the "Blackest Of The Black" tour. This should be of note to Misfits fans as Doyle is the eponymous band of ex-Misfits guitarist O.C. Doyle. Glenn explained his plans for the pairing:

"To do this right, I invited Doyle to join Danzig on stage at 'Blackest Of The Black' for a 'special guest' Misfits set. This is the first time we will be performing on stage together in 20 years. It's the closest thing to a Misfits reunion anyone is ever going to see!"

The tour will be Glenn Danzig's last for the foreseeable future, "It seems like I have been touring my whole life and I want to take some time for myself and do many of the things I've always wanted to do, like direct my first feature film, which I will be doing this next year." Danzig will be supporting their new record Circle Of Snakes, due on August 24 via Evilive.

Jesse Luscious running for Berkeley City Council

If you've read AMP lately or you're local to his riding, you'll likely be aware that Jesse Townley, known to us as Jesse Luscious, is running for Berkeley's City Council. Luscious has been a member of many punk bands including Blatz, The Grups, The Criminals and currently The Frisk. The folks at PunkVoter summarized Jesse's career quite nicely:

No joke. Jesse is running a great campaign and has been a longtime activist! For over ten years, Jesse's been the Secretary of 924 Gilman Street at Berkeley's legendary all ages venue. Jesse is also a dj and producer at UC Berkeley's KALX radio station, a member of the City of Berkeley's Disaster Council, and an active member of the American Civil Liberties Union. When not touring with Adeline Record's The Frisk (a Rock Against Bush Vol 1 artist), he helps out at Alternative Tentacles Records, owned by Jello Biafra.

On top of all that, you may have also noticed that Jesse is a regular participant here at the 'Org. The Frisk, along with Fleshies and Shadowboxer, will be holding a fundraising show for Jesse's campaign on Saturday, September 11th at 924 Gilman Street. If you'd like to donate something to help his campaign you can do so online.

Sid Vicious exhibit on display in London this September

BBC News is reporting that The Hospital art gallery in London will put on an exhibit in September of this year showcasing the infamous relationship of The Sex Pistols' Sid Vicious and Nancy Spungen.

The exhibit includes a blood spattered poster advertising Never Mind The Bollocks which hung in room 100 of New York's Chelsea Hotel where Spungen was stabbed to death, allegedly by Vicious (who himself died from a heroin overdose months later while out on bail). The organizers are not however claiming that the blood is the result of Spungen's death. The collection of artifacts, including original T-shirts, posters and handwritten lyrics, was assembled over the past 15 years by art dealer Paul Stolper and Andrew Wilson (deputy editor of Art Monthly).

In less morbid news, two plaques were recently unveiled in north Norfolk to mark gigs played by the Sex Pistols. The first was at the Pavilion, in the village of West Runton in 1976, the second was in 1977 at the Cromer Links Pavilion (both venues have since been demolished). A ceremony in honour of the band was held at the Village Inn pub in West Runton this past Saturday.

The Living End to release singles collection

The Living End will release a special collection CD / DVD in September titled From Here On In: The Singles 1997-2004. For now it looks like the release is exclusive to Australia, and the band will be touring in Oz to support it in September and October. Head to their website for details on the upcoming shows.

Ozma breaks up

According to a post on the band's official site, Ozma has called it quits after five years. Singer/guitarist Ryan Slego had this to say on the subject:

"Dear ozma fans,

I regret to inform you the band has called it quits. It's been a pleasure to get to know all of you at the shows and through the forum, you've all helped our band be all that it could and for that I am personally thankful. It would be impossible to explain all the reasons for our decision due to their personal nature. These problems have affected the creative and professional facets of the band to the extent that no one feels like continuing any longer. Though I personally wanted to wait to make this decision and give everyone the opportunity to think things over, I hope that something might be salvaged, certain members felt the need to end things as quickly as possible. Therefore, I see no point in waiting even a few more hours to let all of you know what's happening. Again, I'm sorry to have to tell you this. I'm telling you this without the consent of the other members of the band, though based on our most recent discussion less than an hour ago I believe the decision to be final and this to be accurate information.

Thanks for the memories and all the kind words over the years that kept us going. Please continue to listen to the music as you always have and remember us as we once were. The forum will remain in operation for the next 2-4 months.

Sincerely, singer/guitarist, Ryan Slego

Drummer Patrick Edwards has recently added to the post on the website, simply affirming Ryan's post and thanking the fans for supporting the band.

Bassist Daniel Brummel is expected to continue playing with the Elected; no word on where the members of Ozma will end up.

Ramones documentary showing this fall

A website is online promoting the upcoming Ramones documentary *End Of The Century*. The film is slated to show in 22 cities by mid October, some of which are listed below. Aside from ample footage of the Ramones, the Michael Gramaglia and Jim Fields directed film features Joe Strummer's final interview.

Mr. T Experience's Dr. Frank to publish novel

Lookout! Records artist [and Mr. T Experience frontman] Dr. Frank has announced that he has obtained a book deal through Delacorte/Random House Books. The novel has been titled "King Dork," inspired by the track of the same name from MTX's ...And The Women Who Love Them disc. Here's the book's rough plot:

"King Dork" follows the picked-upon and wry Thomas "Chi-Mo" Henderson and his only friend, Sam Helleman, as they fight their way through the demoralizing, mysterious, ridiculous experience of high school. Tom and Sam have each other, and their band, with its ever

changing name; Baby Batter, Tennis With Guitars, Liquid Malice, Green Sabbath, Balls Deep, (to name a few.) The book is funny, and sad, and filled with observations about starting a band and being young, with thriller/mystery elements as well as larger observations about the nature of life. Dr. Frank said, 'What I'm going for is an amalgam of Judy Blume, P.G. Wodehouse, Philip Roth, Agatha Christie and Behind the Music.'

"King Dork" is slated to be out sometime in 2006.

Johnny Rotten gives to the chimps

Numerous sources are reporting that, following through on a promise, Sex Pistols frontman John Lydon has donated over £150,000 (approx 180,442 USD) of the funds raised from his appearance on UK reality show *I'm A Celebrity... Get Me Out Of Here!* to a charity. Johnny's cash went to the Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary in Sierra Leone. Lydon caused his share of controversy while on the show by uttering obscenities on British television and ultimately walking out on the production while it was being filmed.

Meat Puppets bassist Cris Kirkwood sentenced to 21 months in prison

Billboard and others have reported that former Meat Puppets bassist Cris Kirkwood was sentenced yesterday (Aug. 2) to 21 months in prison for attacking a security guard with a baton outside a post office in downtown Phoenix. Kirkwood pleaded guilty May 10 in Mesa, AZ to a charge of assault with a dangerous weapon. The article describes the incident:

According to the criminal complaint filed in U.S. District Court, Kirkwood was arguing with a woman about a parking space outside the post office when she approached security guard Thomas Goodrum. Kirkwood yelled profanities at Goodrum, then shoved the security guard. In the ensuing scuffle, Kirkwood managed to get Goodrum's collapsible baton away from him and hit him on the head, knocking off the guard's eyeglasses. Goodrum then pulled his handgun and fired a shot into Kirkwood's back" the complaint states.

Kirkwood was on probation at the time for a prior drug offense and could have received as much as 27 months in prison.

Shai Hulud becomes The Warmth Of Red Blood

From hulud.com:

Since the completion of Shai Hulud's *That Within Blood III-Tempered* members Matt Fox and Matt Fletcher have been writing material for their next album. Though circumstances have led the band to part ways with singer Geert van der Velde, and change the name to *The Warmth Of Red Blood*, assuredly the new music and lyrics are a continuation and progression that still finds Shai Hulud's message, style, and sound intact.

Fox and Fletcher are looking for a full-time

vocalist for *The Warmth Of Red Blood*. Head to the band's website for details on the type of singer that they're looking for and to download an instrumental version of the song "Whether To Cry Or Destroy" from Shai Hulud's *That Within Blood III-Tempered*. Applicants can use it to demo their vocals when applying.

John Maurer leaves Social Distortion, replaced by Matt Freeman

Long time Social Distortion bassist John Maurer has left the band, to be succeeded by Rancid's Matt Freeman. Here's the press release in full:

After 20 years of serving as Social Distortion's bass player John Maurer has decided to leave the band. Maurer completed the recording of 'Sex, Love and Rock and Roll,' the new Social Distortion full length studio recording but has decided to forgo the usual extended promotion and touring in order to stay home and devote time to his wife and two children.

"For the better part of twenty years I would finish making a record and then leave my home and family for long periods of time," Maurer said. "It was a blast and I have great memories but the hiatus between records in the past six years has given me a chance to develop other interests at home and hang with my family. I just don't want to leave." Mike Ness commented, "I have known John since junior high. I respect what he is doing but we will sure miss him a lot." Matt Freeman, one of the premier bass players in punk rock, has come aboard for this record cycle. "Rancid is always going to be my priority," Matt said. "But Tim has the Transplants and Lars has the Bastards. I like to think I have a pretty cool side band now too."

Ness said the decision to call Freeman was only complicated by Matt's well-known loyalty for Rancid. "We asked ourselves who the best guy out there was and it was Matt. We figured there was no way but it looks like Rancid is going to have just enough down time for us to keep Matt busy. These shows are going to be real special with him in the band." Social Distortion's new record, "Sex, Love and Rock and Roll" is due in stores September 28th. The DVD documentary, "Live in OC" was released on July 27th. The band begins touring in August and plan to be on the road through 2005.

Information on upcoming Bright Eyes Releases

The Tripwire has some information on the upcoming releases from Bright Eyes. Conor Oberst is currently wrapping up work on the second of two records planned for release next year. Oberst already has one more classic styled, folksy record completed, and is working with producer Mike Mogis on something "more digital and poppy." The band is currently heading out on the Vote for Change Tour as we mentioned earlier. ☞

OCTOBER 2004 RELEASE SCHEDULE

| DATE | ARTIST | TITLE | LABEL |
|-------|-------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| 10/4 | Black Flame Dispute | Of The Human Condition | Golf |
| 10/4 | Blueprint, The | Phenomenology | Golf |
| 10/5 | Breather Resist | Charmer | Jade Tree |
| 10/5 | Caliban (Ger) | The Opposite - From Within | Abacus |
| 10/5 | Combat Wounded Veteran | This Is Not an Erect, All-Red Neon Body | No Idea |
| 10/5 | Dry Kill Logic | The Dead And Dreaming | Repossession |
| 10/5 | Enemy You | Stories Never Told | Red Scare |
| 10/5 | Hot Snakes, The | Audit in Progress | Swami |
| 10/5 | Me First and the Gimme Gimmes | Play Jonny's Bar Mitzvah | Fat Wreck Chords |
| 10/5 | Me Without You | Catch For Us The Foxes | Tooth & Nail |
| 10/5 | Open Hand | You And Me | Trustkill |
| 10/5 | Still Life Projector | The Dance Riot | Rise |
| 10/5 | Various | Take Action! Vol IV | Subcity |
| 10/5 | Various | A Day In The Life Of | New School |
| 10/5 | Voodoo Glow Skulls | Tradición, Addicción y Revolución | Victory |
| 10/5 | Whiskey Sunday | Maldecido | 1234 Go! |
| 10/5 | Æffect, The | Secrets & Lies | Suburban Home |
| 10/10 | FallOut40 | Attain To A Calm (cdep) | You And Whose Army? |
| 10/11 | Nasum | Shift | Burning Heart |
| 10/12 | Blood Brothers, The | Crimes | V2 |
| 10/12 | Jimmy Eat World | Futures | Universal |
| 10/12 | Juliette and The Licks | Like A Bolt of Lightning | Fiddler |
| 10/12 | Straylight Run | S/T (full-length) | Victory |
| 10/12 | Sum 41 | Chuck | Island |
| 10/14 | Capitalist Casualties | Years In Ruin | Six Weeks |
| 10/14 | Funeral Shock | S/T (Vinyl) | Six Weeks |
| 10/18 | Midasuno | tba (full-length) | Lockjaw |
| 10/19 | Anti-Flag | Death of a Nation (DVD) | A-F |
| 10/19 | Anti-Flag | A New Kind Of Army (re-issue) | A-F |
| 10/19 | Big D & The Kids Table | How It Goes | Springman |
| 10/19 | Bury Your Dead | Cover Your Tracks | Victory |
| 10/19 | Hearts Over Rome | Everybody, Everybody | Undecided |
| 10/19 | Isis | Panopticon | Ipecac |

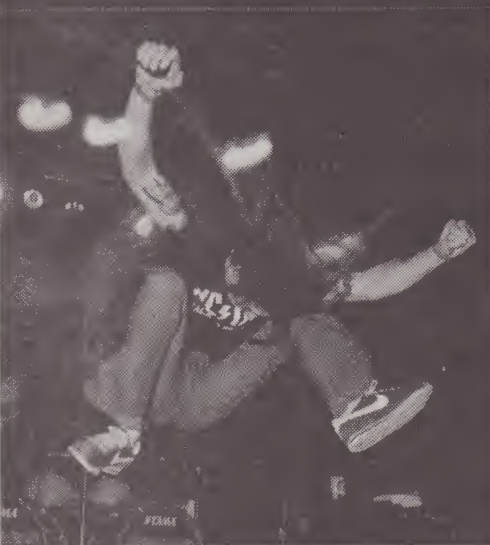
OCT/NOV 2004 RELEASE SCHEDULE

| DATE | ARTIST | TITLE | LABEL |
|-------|---------------------|---|------------------|
| 10/19 | Kane Hodder | The Pleasure to Remain so Heartless | Suburban Home |
| 10/19 | Queers | Summer Hits No. 1 | Suburban Home |
| 10/19 | Sick Of It All | Outtakes For The Outcast | Fat Wreck Chords |
| 10/19 | Suicide Note | Too Sick To Dance (Forever Fucked) | Ferret |
| 10/19 | Ted Leo | Shake The Sheets | Lookout! |
| 10/25 | Danko Jones | The Magical World Of Rock (spoken word) | Bad Taste |
| 10/25 | Fight, The | Nothing New Since Rock 'n Roll | Repossession |
| 10/25 | Various | Heartattack Compilation | Burning Heart |
| 10/26 | Draw Blood | The Calm Before The Storm (mcd) | Trash Art |
| 10/26 | Glass and Ashes | Aesthetic Arrest | No Idea |
| 10/26 | Glory Of This | Adoration | Indianola |
| 10/26 | Home Grown | When It All Comes Down | Drive-Thru |
| 10/26 | ICanMakeAMess... | S/T (full-length) | Drive-Thru |
| 10/26 | North Lincoln | Truth Is A Menace | No Idea |
| 10/26 | Rabid Dogs, The | Intruder | Pelado |
| 10/26 | Secret, The | S/T (full-length) | Goodfellow |
| 10/26 | Until the End | The Blind Leading The Lost | Eulogy / Alveran |
| 10/29 | Donnas, The | Gold Medal | Atlantic |
| 10/31 | Exit | tba (full-length) | Some |
| 11/2 | Against Me! | We're Never Going Home (DVD) | Fat Wreck Chords |
| 11/2 | Strung Out | Exile In Oblivion | Fat Wreck Chords |
| 11/2 | Twenty2 | Unstable (cdep) | New School |
| 11/2 | Various | A Santa Cause (A Punk Rock Christmas) | Immortal |
| 11/2 | Various | Punkrock Holocaust (DVD) | Springman |
| 11/9 | Putrid Flowers, The | On The Eve of St. Angus | Falcom |
| 11/9 | Scrubs, The | Return To The Basement (ep) | Nice Guy |
| 11/9 | Various | The Hellcat Movie (DVD) | Hellcat |
| 11/9 | Various | Pop Punk Fever Vol. II | Nice Guy |
| 11/15 | Methadones, The | Not Economically Viable | Thick |
| 11/16 | Crane | tba (full-length) | Freedumb |
| 11/16 | Phenomenauts, The | Re-entry | Springman |
| 11/16 | Sinai Beach | Immersed | Facedown |
| 11/30 | Duvall | Oh Holy Night | Asian Man |

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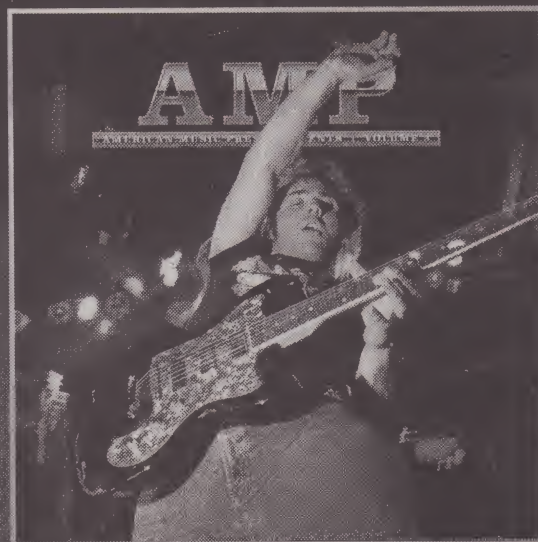
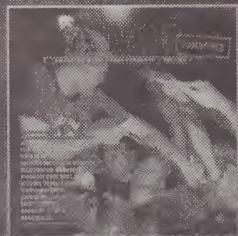
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THE DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN
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ENTOMBED
GLASS CASKET
GOD FORBID
HATE ETERNAL
HEAVEN SHALL BURN
HYPOCRISY
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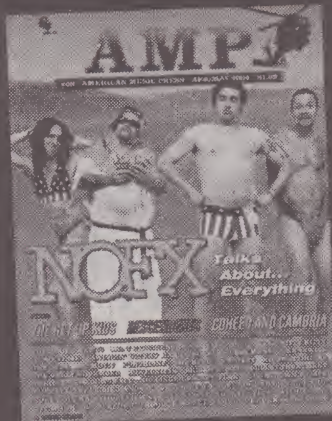
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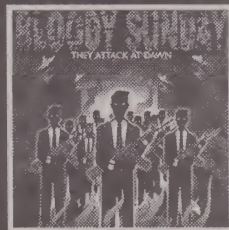
DESTRUCTION MADE SIMPLE
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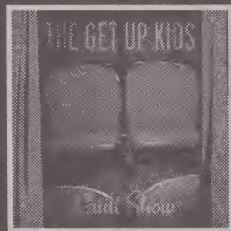
AGE OF RUIN
TIDES OF TRAGEDY



BLOODY SUNDAY
THEY ATTACK AT DAWN



DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL
A MARK, A MISSION, A BRAND A SCAR



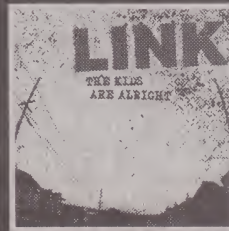
THE GET UP KIDS
GUILT SHOW



THE SLANDERIN
RHUMBA OF RATTLESNAKES, A MURDER OF CROWS



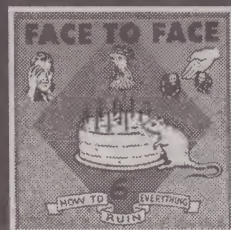
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YOUR MURDER MIX TAPE



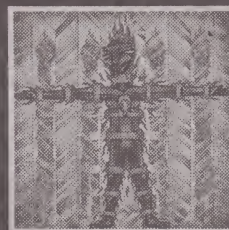
LINK
THE KIDS ARE ALRIGHT



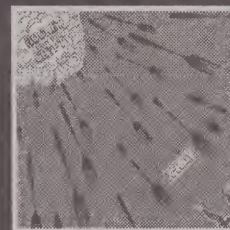
THE FRISK
AUDIO RANSOM NOTE



FACE TO FACE
HOW TO RUIN EVERYTHING



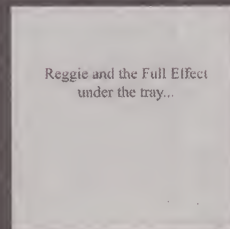
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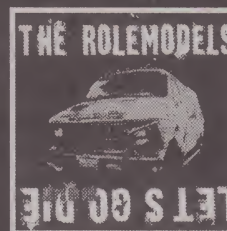
HOUSE OF HEROS
WHAT YOU WANT IS NOW



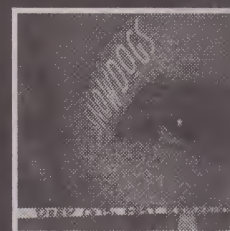
THE VACANCY
THE VACANCY



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COMPANIONS TO DEVILS AND SAINTS



THE ROLEMODELS
LET'S GO DIE



SNOWDOGS
DEEP CUTS, FAST REMEDIES



VARIOUS ARTISTS
PUNCH DRUNK V



PULLEY
MATTERS



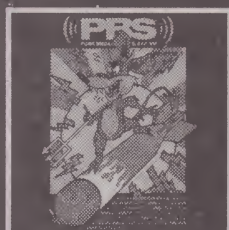
THE FRANCHISE
ORIGINAL INEVITABLE



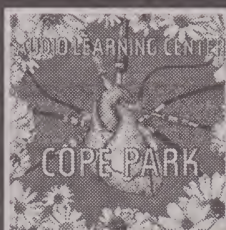
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Hawthorne Heights will throw in a fashionable t-shirt and hoodie and Victory has the new album, 'The Silence in Black and White' for the grand prize winner and two runners up.



Hawthorne Heights is on tour now!

OCTOBER

- 3 Denver, CO @ OGDEN THEATRE
- 4 Salt Lake City, UT @ IN THE VENUE
- 6 Tempe, AZ @ MARQUEE THEATRE
- 7 Tucson, AZ @ THE ROCK
- 8 Las Vegas, NV @ HOUSE OF BLUES
- 9 San Diego, CA @ SOMA
- 10 Anaheim, CA @ HOUSE OF BLUES
- 11 Anaheim, CA @ HOUSE OF BLUES
- 12 Ventura, CA @ VENTURA THEATRE
- 14 Orangevale, CA @ BOARDWALK
- 15 San Francisco, CA @ SLIM'S
- 16 Portland, OR @ MEOW MEOW
- 17 Seattle, WA @ GRACELAND
- 20 Minneapolis, MN @ QUEST
- 21 Lawrence, KS @ THE BOTTLENECK
- 22 St. Louis, MO @ MISSISSIPPI NIGHTS
- 23 Grand Rapids, MI @ THE INTERSECTION
- 24 Indianapolis, IN @ KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
- 26 Pontiac, MI @ CLUTCH CARGO'S
- 27 Cleveland, OH @ THE ODEON

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DEFIANCE

RISE OR FALL

Portland's punk legends return to the studio for their fourth full-length album, already being heralded as their best since their 1995 debut classic "No Future, No Hope". First 200 copies available on colored vinyl with a free poster.

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Defiance merchandise and limited colored vinyl available exclusively at www.punkcore.com and PUNKUTOPA.COM

By Matt Cote / Photos By Jeremy Weiss
(jeremyweiss.com)

Bursting upon the scene in more than four years ago with chaotic, powerful, intense punk rock anthems that wreaked of old-school '77 style influences, The Explosion were seen as the young upstarts that were going to return punk rock to its once glorious form. During a time when punk was looking for a savior, with the sudden break-up of the perceived messiahs Kid Dynamite, The Explosion looked like just the ones to do it. Since 2000, they have released three EPs (one with Revelation, which is a story in itself) and one full-length, and have been a force within the punk rock community.

Now here we are today, more than four years removed from the release of their first full-length, *Flash Flash Flash*, and about to be shown again why the Explosion can be the ones to carry torch of the punk rock community. *Black Tape* is set to drop this month and represents a step forward for the band, combining their earliest sounds of youthful aggression and combining it with more mature songwriting skills and pop sensibilities to create not just an album, but a complete work. Written over the course of a year and a half, this album represents The Explosion of today – not exactly the angry upstarts from four years ago, but don't think they've forgotten where they come from, either.

Two years ago, The Explosion made the jump from the small, independent label Jade Tree to the majors. What brought that move about?

Ok, well, to be honest we were on tour that summer; we did the East Coast for two weeks and the West Coast for two weeks. It was a headlining tour, and we did a couple of weeks and decided to fly out to California to do a couple weeks of headlining up the

West Coast. We got to Los Angeles and we were playing a show at the Troubadour, and apparently there were all these major labels there, like five or six of them checking us out because they were really interested in us, and we had no idea they were going to be there or anything like that. So we played the show and all these people were there, like this person was from Warner Brothers, this person is from Interscope, or whatever and we were like 'wow.' We had never even considered signing to a major label. So we were on our way to San Francisco to play another show and my phone just kept ringing off the hook. Once one label is interested in you, the word starts circulating around and everyone is interested. At one point, I think seven labels were calling me. So for the next couple of months we were taking meetings with labels and we were just like 'alright, do we really wanna do this? Do we not?' So we decided that we wanted to it in like September or something like that, and in October we confirmed the fact that we were going to sign with Virgin because they seemed to know what we wanted the

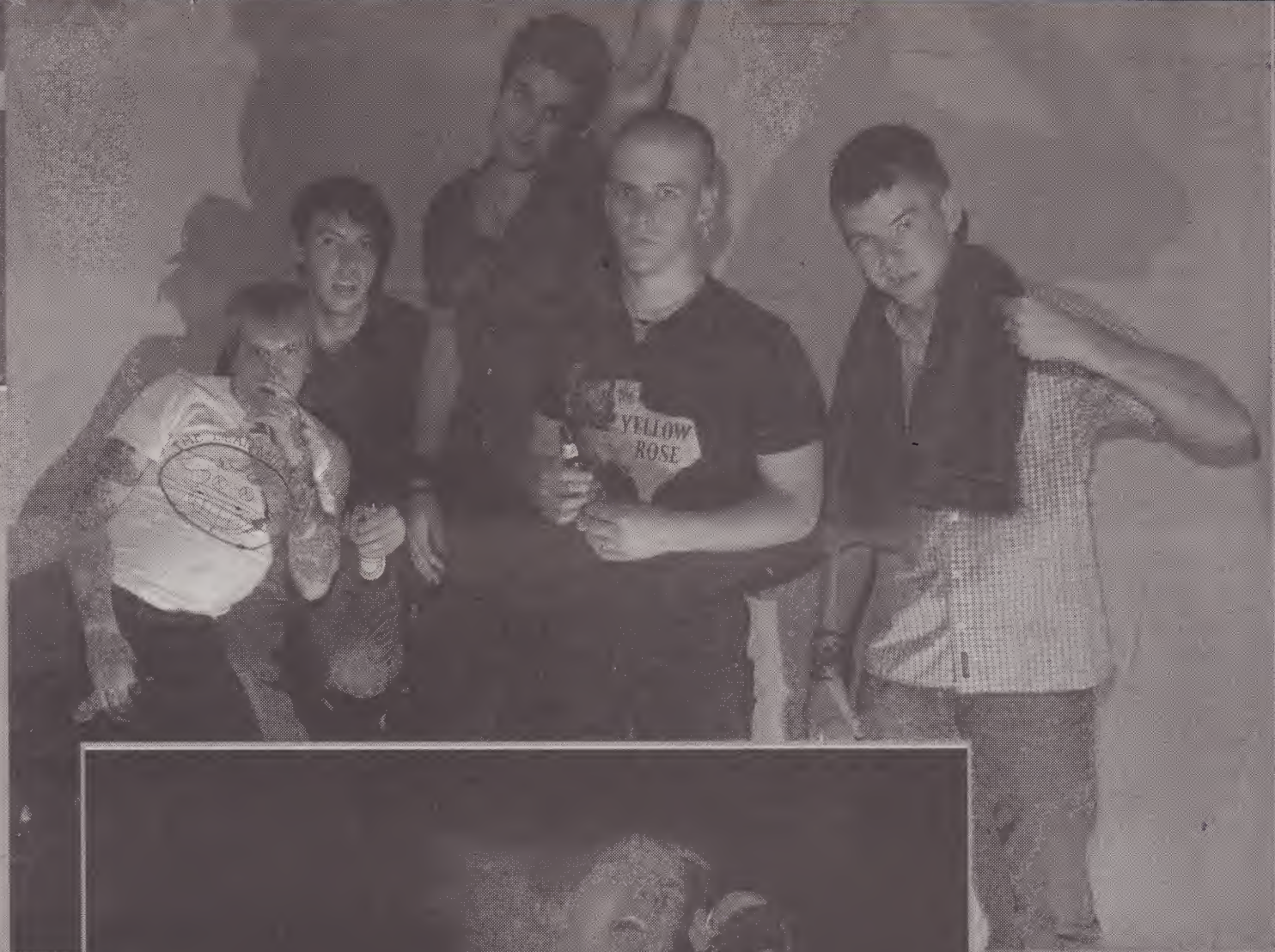
most and they are really on track what we wanna do, and they're on the East Coast so that is good.

Did you ever see yourself or your band as the type of music that a major label would be interested in?

No, not before that. I was very, very surprised to be honest. The record industry right now is so kind of up in the air that they're just grasping at all kinds of bands to see what the next big thing is gonna be, I guess, at least that's how it seems to me. But I mean, when we started the band that was the furthest thing from our minds signing to a major label. We could barely even play. Over the years we became tighter as we toured more, wrote more music, got better players in the band. We got a new drummer, we got Sam, but it was still a bit of a surprise. We do have some poppy elements to our music, but it's really pretty aggressive.



THE EXPLOSION



You signed to Virgin in the fall of 2002, and two years later, *Black Tape* is finally here. What took so long?

Well I'll tell you what man — being on a major label is not easy. You've gotta fucking demo these songs, and they don't wanna put it out. The fact is they spent a lot of

money on this record. It's not like it's an independent label, that spends, you know, \$10,000 on the thing. They're spending multiple hundreds of thousands of dollars on the album to be recorded, so they want to make sure it's perfect before they put you in the studio. But that's why it took so

long. We were demoing, and recording, and going out on tour for a long time before they gave us the green light to go into the studio to spend as much money as they were going to spend on us, but that's the deal. It was kind of frustrating, taking two years to write the album, but I'm really

happy with how it all came out.

So now that you've got the first Virgin record recorded and it's ready to drop, how has the major-label experience been to this point?

It's been, like I said, it's been frustrating up until now. We were doing demo work for a good year and a half, but now that the album has been delivered they're really excited about it. They're really putting a lot of energy into getting behind it. They're going to radio with it, we're shooting a video for it, and we're excited now because the album has been delivered. Now we're reaping the benefits of the major label, so it's good. If the album flops, it's gonna be, ya know, see you later or you better write another fucking album real quickly or something like that, but as of now we're pleased.

How would you compare and contrast the entire experience or releasing an

album, from writing to recording to the actual release, between an indie label like Jade Tree and Virgin?

The writing process for like Flash Flash Flash with Jade Tree was like two months writing with two weeks recording, and it cost \$2,000. For Black Tape, the numbers were that it took about a year and a half to write, three months to record, and the album costs around \$300,000. So just from looking at the difference in those numbers, you can tell what the difference in the albums is.

I'm sure you've heard the rumblings from all around about being a sellout, abandoning the underground, etc. since you've signed to Virgin. Has this happened, and how do you deal with those types of comments?

Actually, it hasn't really happened at all. I don't think anybody really, umm... well we weren't really ever that big that we were considered sellouts. When Rancid signed to a major label and all that shit, I can see why they getting that from their fans because they were a huge band that made their way basically on an independent label for over 10 years. They sold over a million copies of that record on that label - 4 million I think it was. But for our band, we've only sold like 20,000 records or something like that, so there were maybe a few kids here and there that were like 'oh, you know, you're selling out', but we were never really that popular to get that kind of attention. I haven't really dealt with that shit at all. Most all people have been like 'Wow, fuck yeah, that's fucking awesome. I'm so stoked that you guys are gonna have an album that hopefully can reach a wider audience.'

So were you at all liable to Jade Tree, in terms of future releases, or were you free and clear to move wherever you wanted?

Well we are free of Jade Tree, not that that was that big of a deal, getting out of our contract with Jade Tree. We've been really tight with those guys and stuff, so it's nothing like that. We probably wouldn't be opposed to putting out another record on Jade Tree in the future, but we're not free and clear to do whatever we want

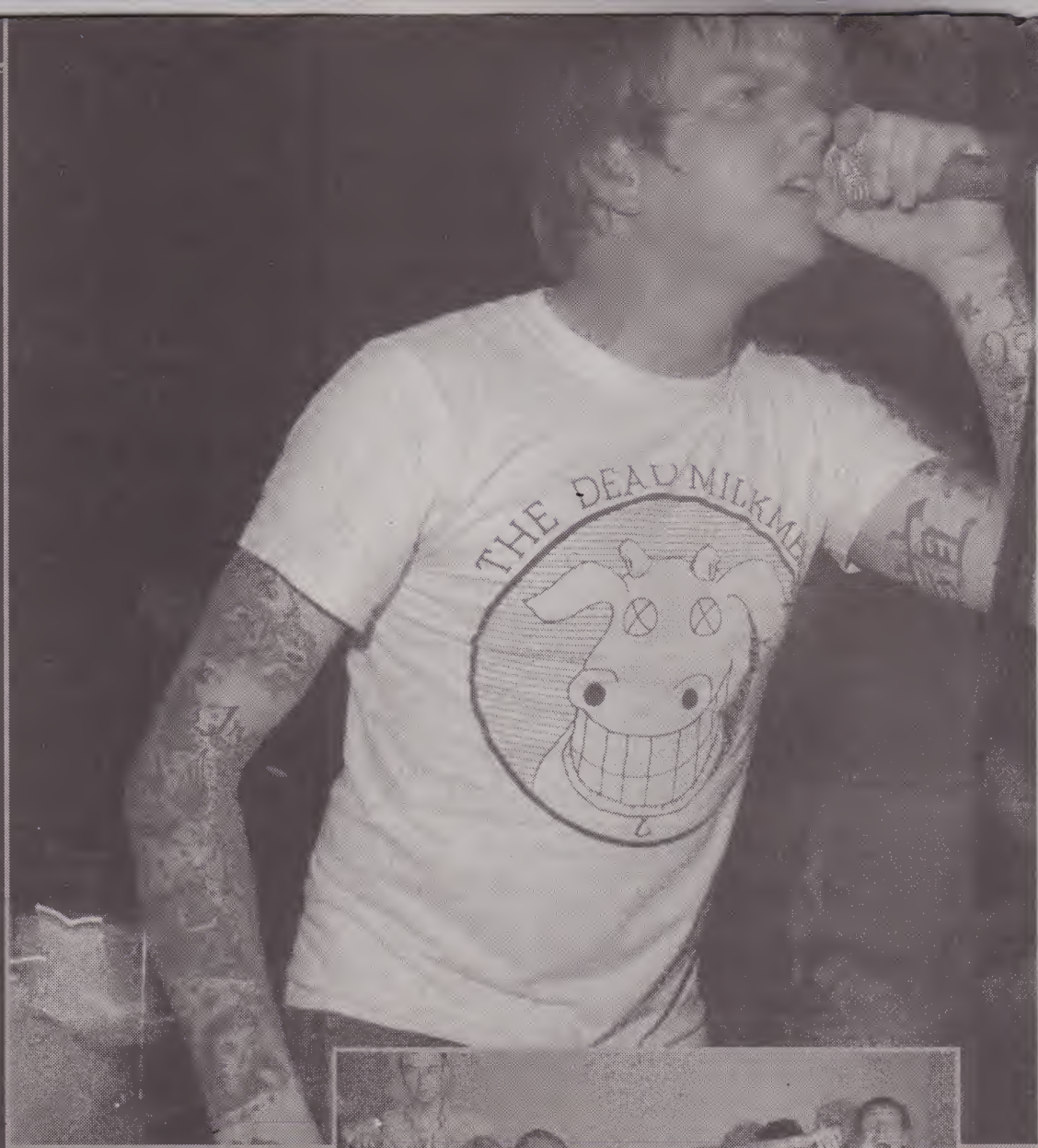
to do. We signed to Virgin a multiple-album deal, so we have like four more albums or something like that.

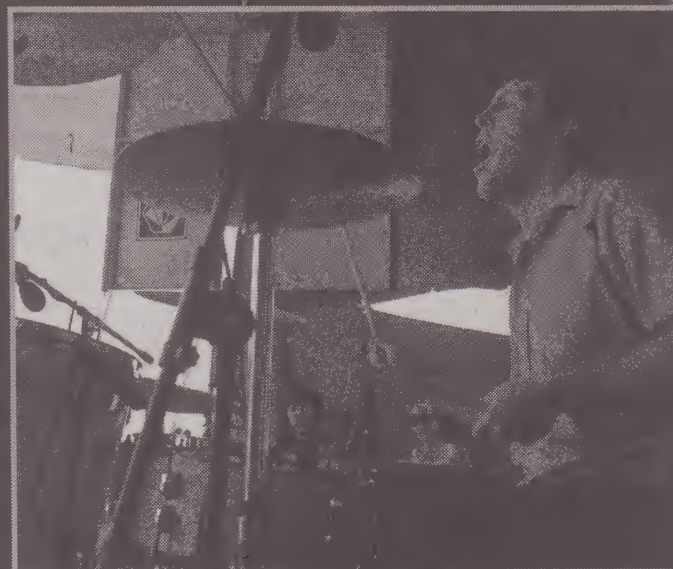
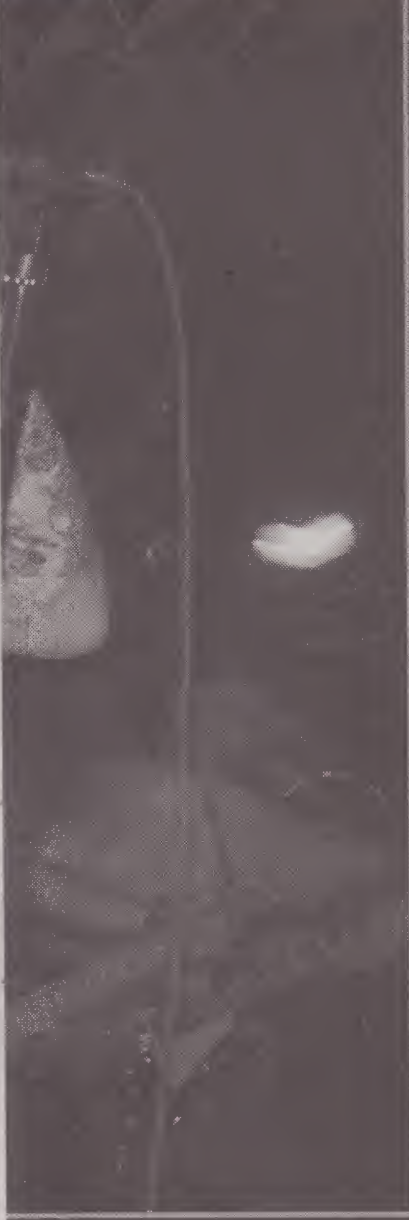
Black Tape sounds amazing - It's got a lot of the classic Explosion feel, with the angry, straight forward songs, but perhaps a bit more mature song writing over the last full-length four years ago, with a little more pop thrown in. Do you feel as though that's an accurate portrayal of the release?

Yeah, definitely, I'm glad you said that because we're not like in our young 20s anymore. I'm going on 28, we're all four years older, so obviously our songwriting has become a little more developed and the themes that we write about are a little more developed now, and I think the idea of what we are trying to do is a little more

developed because we've been a band for so long. In November, it's going to be six years of being a band and we can't write songs about going out in Boston and getting drunk or whatever when we were doing that when we were 22. We're all spread out now, some of us are living in New York, not that that makes us any bigger or better, but we're

becoming adults now, and we're writing more about developed ideas, and developing our songwriting a little more, and that's good, I'm glad that it's happened like that. I wouldn't want to write about the same thing, or record the same album again. Like, regurgitating the same album, that's a little boring. I'm happy that we've gotten to





develop a lot more as a band, and I'm actually happy that Virgin has allowed us to do that.

Although Black Tape does have more pop elements to it than your past releases, it's still got some teeth to it, with that straight-forward style that you became known for with your past releases. You've even included a track from Flash Flash Flash, No Revolution. What made you decide to include that song?

Basically we wrote a bunch of songs for this album. We wrote about 25 songs and we were trying to pick and choose, what songs we wanted to do, and our A&R guy really loved this song, and he brought it up. He was like 'what would you think of re-recording that song for the album?' And at first we

were just like 'nah, we don't want to do that' because we were writing more and more, but after we thought about it, we figured it's a song that always gets the best reaction at our shows...

And there are probably a lot of kids who have never heard it that will be hearing this CD.

Exactly. So that's what we were thinking. This song gets a good reaction when we play live. It's a really good song, and it's still a really relevant song, not like one of our early songs where we are like 'OK, we've developed more than that.' It's still a fully realized and developed song and we were just like if this record really does well, who knows that might be an important song for all these kids to hear. Not to mention that if they do hear that song, we're putting

a little thing on the release saying where that song originally came from some hopefully they'll go buy the other albums. So hopefully we're showing newer fans of The Explosion what came before, which is a good way of getting people that might just be getting into us into all of our releases.

I think it's a positive thing that a song like No Revolution, which has to do with stale nature of the music scene, is included in a release that will be so widely available as this. Did that play into the decision to re-record this song at all?

Yeah, definitely. That was another reason we decided to go ahead and do it. It will reach that wide audience that the original recording didn't get to.

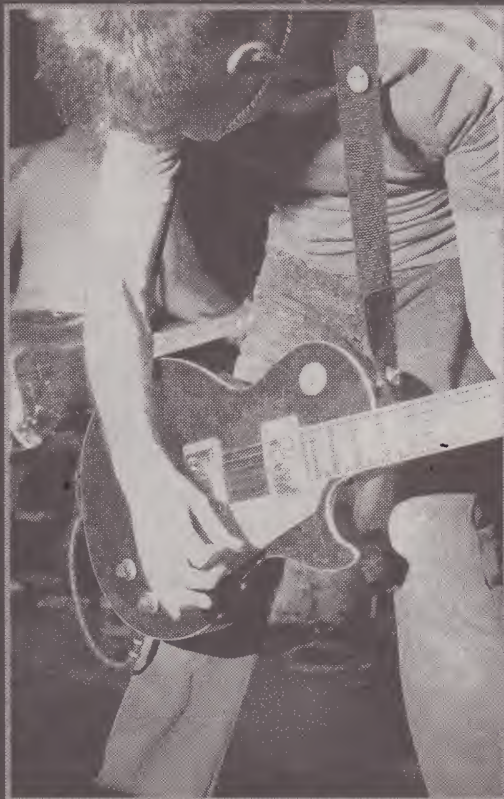
Black Tape is honestly one of the only major-label punk rock releases in recent memory that is more punk rock and less pop. How do you think the music crowd, outside of our scene, will react to this release?

Well I think that they will react to the poppier songs first, if that makes sense. You know, like Here I Am is a single that will be played on the radio, that's got a really pop hook to it, and it's on there for a reason, and it was chosen to be on the radio for a reason. I mean, we didn't write that song with the intention of that being this big pop radio song. That's a song that Matt actually brought to me, and he brought the song to one of our writing sessions and I remember thinking it's a great song and it's really poppy, and it could be a really good track on the album. Then we played it live and Virgin was at the song, and they were just like 'wow, that song is really good. Would you like to have that maybe be one of the singles?' And it ended up being the first single on the album, because I think it has that pop type of feel. So I think kids that are into the pop stuff, will react to...well, if they buy the album and don't just download the single, they'll react to that song and some of the other stuff, but hopefully be into the rest of the album, too.

So maybe songs on this album that have the catchy, pop feel could be somewhat of a gateway to newer fans into the more aggressive, straight-forward punk tracks on the CD.

Well that's the great white hope of why we signed to a major label anyway. We were hoping that we would be able to capture the audience, like go on tour with some of the poppier punk bands out there, that really love the sing-along choruses like they have and open their eyes to some more, I guess, traditional forms of what this kind of music is, or music that has a little more to say, I would think.

When recording, did you guys feel any pressure to write a song that could be seen as a hit, or something that could get some serious radio air play, or was it simply writing as usual?



Definitely. There was definitely pressure on us to write two or three songs that would do well on the radio. That's one of the biggest fucking pressures that artists have, because if your song does well on the radio, that pretty much guarantees the success of your album. There's no way of going around it. And if you're on a major label and they're spending a lot of money on you, they want to see that. That's why it took so long to record our fucking album, because they wanted to see songs that would do well in that format. It's unfortunate, but I guess in their eyes, a necessary thing to do when you're writing an album.

When taken at face value, the song *Atrocity* sounds like your entry into the political ring, offering your take on the disgusting mess that our Country has found itself involved in. Is that what this song is all about?

Yeah, definitely. It's very straight forward. That song to me is one of my favorite songs on the album. I think it's got a really strong message, there's no denying what that song is about. That's my wife's favorite song on the album as well. It's got a really strong chorus. I wouldn't even con-

sider it a punk rock song, more just a rock song with a really strong message. There's just no fucking denying what that song is about. It's just straight up fuck you to the Government. Well, not fuck you to the Government, but like, you can't control how I feel and how I view what's going on in the world, and that's just what the song is about and there's no denying that. That's a song that Sam wrote and when I heard that song at first, I was just blown away by how direct it is. And it's unfortunate, but I think that a song like that couldn't be a radio single because there are so many people...radio is so afraid, and people are so afraid, to express an idea, especially about something so topical as the world. But I love that. I think people should be more brave, and instead of riding on the fence, just tell us exactly how you feel.

When the band first began, Sam and Andrew were not members. What do each of them bring to the band that perhaps you didn't have before they joined?

Straight away they increased the musicianship of the band 100%. When Andrew came in the drummer that we had before him didn't really even

want to be a drummer. He's a good friend of ours, but he didn't even want to play drums. He wanted to play guitar and sing in a band, and that's what he does now. But Andrew is a drummer. Straight away, that's what he wants to do, he doesn't want to do anything except play the drums, and he's fucking great at it. So the musicianship when Andrew came in, it was just like night and day. And the same thing goes with Sam. He's amazing at guitar playing and songwriting, and he brought something to the table that wasn't there. As a song writer, we're both songwriters, and I think Sam has shown me a lot about how to write a song. And how we all write songs together, and it's great. It made the band be able to exist. I feel like if we had the same band we had when we began, there's no way that you and I would be having this discussion right now, we'd be nowhere near where we are right now.

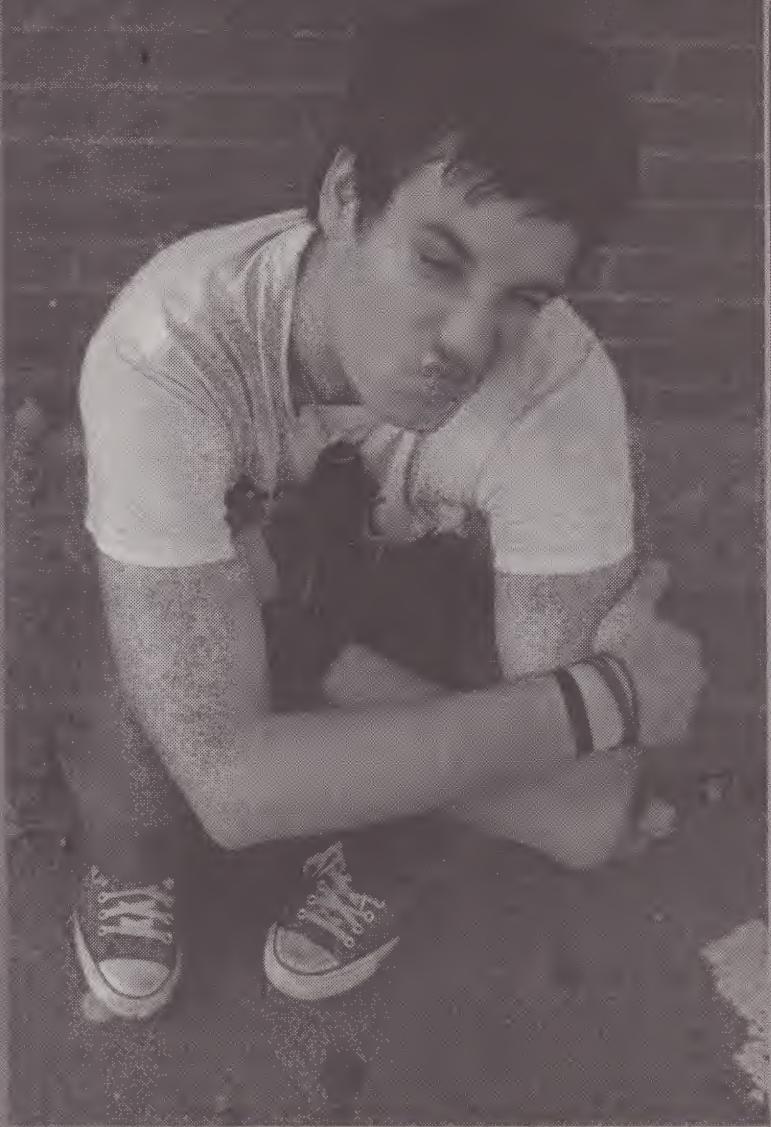
Prior to *Black Tape* dropping, you released the *Red Tape* EP on your own label, *Tarantulas*. How has the response to the EP been?

It's been really good, actually, I can't believe how good. We sold out of it half-way through our tour with the *Burning Brides*. I think there's a few

left online, but we sold out of them right away and people were calling me to tell me they liked it. It's only three songs, and it's got the single, it's got *Filthy Insane*, and we did a Joy Division cover. People have really liked it. It's a really simple release, basically so when people walked over they'd know our album was coming out.

Being limited to 1,000 copies, only available at shows and online, and having some insanely creative packaging, all hand-screened, I assume has created quite a stir with the punk rock collectors. How important is that to you when working on a release such as this, creating something that will become sought after?

That's a huge part of what we do at *Tarantulas*, that's what separates us from other labels.



You know, we're not making a ton of money because we're spending a lot of money on our releases. Everything is a collector's item, and that's what we're doing this for. We're all people who love package, who love artwork, we're all record collectors ourselves. Making a small piece of plastic that is a CD into a collector's item is really difficult to do, so you've got to really jazz it up, and I think a lot of people appreciate that.

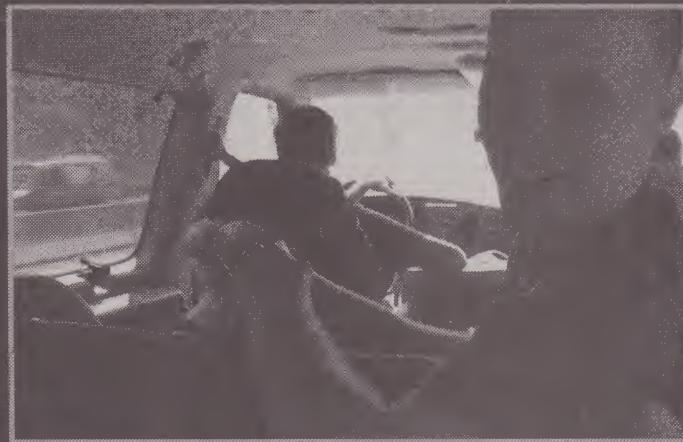
How has the experience of running your own label been, and has it changed the way you view the labels you work with?

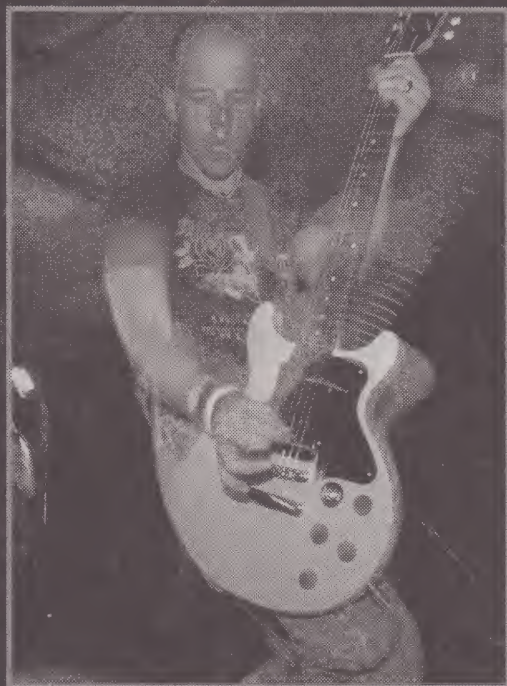
To be honest, the amount of work that I do for the label, as far as administrative, even anyone in the band, we don't deal with a lot of the administrative shit. Our manager Rama, he does that, and he has a couple of other people that work with

him. He ran a label before called Big Wheel Rec, and he's been doing this for years and years, and that's kind of why we hired him. He's kind of a jack of all trades, he's our manager, he's the band's manager, he's the label's manager, he owns a portion of the label, we have a designer that works with Rama and they live in the same house, and they run the label out of the house. Everything that gets printed gets printed out of the house. So as far as that shit is concerned, the band members are pretty much the A&R guys. So we don't do the administrative shit, we don't pay the bills; we just do what we wanna do. We do the fun stuff.

Is Virgin helping out with the distribution of Tarantulas, or are they involved in any way with the label?

No, they're not. We're com-





pletely independent of Virgin. I think they helped with the pressing of the Red Tape EP only, just because they wanted that thing to be out there. They have vested interest in that, so that's the only thing that they helped us out with.

Art has always been a major part of what The Explosion is about. Although not as important to the band as the music itself, the artwork with the releases has always felt like it plays a large part in

the overall aesthetics of the work. How seriously do you all take the design work for each release?

I mean, it's just like you said, it's a huge part. It's always, at least the art direction is controlled 100% by the band. First in the band is Damian, because he's the guy who went to art school, and he's got a really good aesthetic, but secondly by the band. He comes to us with the design, or he'll get the design from somebody, and he'll run it by the band and we say yes or no or

change this or whatever. We've got a designer on board now with Tarantulas, his name is Ryan Johnson, and Ryan and Damian worked hand-in-hand to develop the layout of the Black Tape record. The album artwork is really basic on the outside, but when you open it, it's really rich:

Aside from a few changes within the lineup, how has The Explosion changed since the early days, either in terms of the music itself, the approach you

take towards your music, the attitude you have towards your careers, etc?

I mean, it's changed 100%. Well, not 100%, but I'd say 50%. I mean we still have the same energy and the same passion for writing cool stuff and for artwork and all that stuff, but we have developed our songs more, as far as the music. The songs are longer, the songs are more involved, and the songs are richer in theme. This band is everybody's career now, this is what everyone does. We're pretty much, well not even pretty much, we are a full time writing and touring band, and that's a dream of all of ours. I don't have to fucking work a job right now because this is what I get to do. And it wasn't like that three years ago, it's only been like this for two years, and it's fucking great man, it's fucking cool as shit. Everybody is just really stoked and everybody considers this to be a really lucky opportunity, and the opportunity to make a career out of this is cool. Everyone is really serious about it. Everyone is into touring and writing. We took two years to write this album, so it's a really serious thing for us right now, which is really good.

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D.I.Y. SINCE 1993

MEL CHEPLOWITZ

Maybe I'm a dumb guy and I just don't "get it," but what's the story with the "WAR ON TERRORISM?" If a bunch of Saudi's crash planes into buildings here and kill 3,000 people, because they don't like our government - that's TERRORISM. On the other hand, the USA bombs the shit out of buildings in Iraq because we don't like their government, killing 20,000 innocent civilians, and somehow that's not TERRORISM!? Give me a fucking break! 20,000 dead in a country with a population of 25 million versus 3,000 dead in a country of almost 300 million. Which one sounds worse to you? And the explanations given for it are simply beyond fucking belief. "Exporting Democracy" - Yeah right! Did you know that the only nationally elected U.S. officials are President and Vice President, and they are selected by the Electoral College. There's a large fucking difference between holding elections and actual democracy - if you don't believe me ask Al Gore. Saddam Hussein was fucking elected, which is more than I can say for George "the fixer" Bush, a guy who has never seen a loophole he didn't like. "Weapons Of Mass Destruction" - A claim Bush used to like to make at least once at each of his daily appearances at supermarket openings, despite the fact that highly trained teams of United Nations weapons inspectors who were in Iraq couldn't find any. The difference between Bush and the weapons inspectors is that the weapons inspectors actually do know the difference between their ass and a hole in the ground. In defense of Bush though, I should mention that although no actual weapons of mass destruction were found, they did arrest a guy named Ahmed, who was alleged to have owned a starter's pistol. Another thing I've got to mention is that the United States claimed that chemical weapons were WMD's. Now I'm not saying that chemical weapons aren't bad (the USA has more than all other countries combined), but they ain't biological or nuclear, and are technically not WMD's, but in any case, Iraq didn't have those either.

The Abu Ghraib prison tortures provided an interesting irony. That was the same prison Saddam Hussein used to torture political enemies. Of course, America used the prison to torture folks who were rounded up pretty much at random, including children. We've got to torture these people or they'll never tell us where they've hidden the fucking weapons of mass destruction. I want to thank the media for the sanitized version of the Abu Ghraib atrocities they presented to the American public. I'm not kidding either! I've heard enough details about the thousands of pictures and hundreds of hours of videos to know I couldn't stomach them. I'll kindly spare you the details here. It's great that we have a President who is against homosexual mar-

riage, but thinks homosexual rape is OK. At least he's keeping an open mind. The two dozen approved pictures that have been reprinted over and over are bad enough, although it pisses me off when they show the photo of the naked Iraqi being threatened with dogs, and fail to mention that there are 27 other photos of the incident and in the final photo the naked guy is lying on the floor in a pool of blood.

I can't believe that anyone actually believes that there is a WAR ON TERRORISM. Terrorism is at an all-time fucking high - double DUH!! Most, if not all international TERRORISM can be traced to America. Last week was a tragic week in Russia. There was a suicide bombing by Chechen rebels outside a Moscow subway station that killed 10 people, and two commercial airliners blown up in flight killing everyone aboard, just minutes apart. Then came the Beslan hostage drama where the Chechen rebels took over a school on the first day of classes and killed 350 people, mostly small children. The Chechen rebels are the most heinous terrorists on Earth, and yet they have the support of the American government.

Check out this report from Associated Press - "*Russian officials have repeatedly cast the military campaign in Chechnya as part of a war against international terrorism - a battle they say Western countries have hindered by granting asylum to Chechen figures and questioning Kremlin policy in Chechnya. "When our Western partners urge us to rethink our policy and tactics in Chechnya, I would advise them not to interfere in Russian internal matters - which they do by granting asylum to terrorists who are directly to blame for the tragedy of the Chechen people," Lavrov said after the meeting. He did not name specific countries, but Russia was particularly angered by Britain's granting of refugee status to Akhmed Zakayev, an envoy for Chechen rebel leader Aslan Maskhadov, and by US asylum for Ilyas Akhmadov, who Maskhadov named his foreign minister while he was Chechnya's president in the late 1990s. In comments published yesterday in the newspaper Vremya Novostei, Lavrov said: "Granting asylum to people involved in terrorism - and Russia has documented evidence of this - not only causes us regret but also effectively undermines the unity of the anti-terrorist coalition."*

So there you have it; representatives of Aslan Maskhadov, one of the most dangerous terrorists alive, are given asylum by the Bush administration! Your tax dollars at work. ☛

When Cries for Help

An Article About the Organization Called "Protect"

By Todd Taylor

IT'S FUNNY BECAUSE IT'S SO WRONG. THE DWARVES, in a clip between songs on *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, have a supposedly thirteen-year-old girl thanking Blag for the good, sexual times on her birthday. This is America. We have freedoms of speech. This isn't an article about how the Dwarves should be banned. They aren't known for being a band to take too seriously, having even faked the death of one of their own band members. This article's about a topic that's a lot harder to breach. Kids getting fucked. Not in a metaphor. Not in a song. Not in some distant land. But real kids getting really fucked by adults in America, most often by people who they know and trust.

Being a punk rocker for nearly twenty years and having been in contact with thousands of others who apply the same label to themselves, unfortunately, I've never had to look that hard to hear stories of abuse and neglect. I'm not claiming that all punks have been abused, but it frequently comes with the territory.

I also do a lot of thinking about the future of the world, and not in some utopian way or a simple struggle between good and evil, but in practical ways. If the very adults who are supposed to be protecting kids keep on abusing them, what's going to happen? Multitudes of prey become more refined predators.

Already, there have been court trials of a serial rapist who began raping others at seven years old. Instead of nurturing, emotional stability, and the basic skill set needed to understand that their actions directly affect other people, leagues of kids today are being set on the course to becoming sociopaths. Unable to feel compassion or empathy, their feelings for other people are often cauterized the second when someone they trusted violates them.

I'm also not one for roses, sunshine, holding hands in a circle, and chanting for a better tomorrow. Hell, I'll be honest; a lot of kids annoy me. I really don't like it when the kid

downstairs plays "I'm going to bounce this ball on the wall outside for four hours" when I'm trying to work. I don't like it when they whack my truck in the parking lot. I'm not giving them high fives every time I walk out of my apartment.

Several years ago, through Vanessa of Fat Wreck Chords, I came in contact with Andrew Vachss. Mr. Vachss is, among other things, a pro-bono child lawyer. Through our conversation, I was alarmed to learn that currently many states condone incest by giving it their official stamp of tolerance. Their laws state that if there is any sort of blood link between an adult and a child and the adult has sex with that child, the result is most often probation, not jail. This is a lesser sentence than if an adult randomly sexually attacks or molests a child they don't know. In effect, states like California actually reward predators with a lesser sentence for crimes committed against children they're related to. It's estimated that in 2004, two thousand children in the Golden State who have been so bold as to recount in court how a parent or relative, rather than a stranger, sexually exploited them will that relative given a special exemption from prison sentences. After their trials, any perpetrators given a get-out-of-jail-free card will have even more command over their victims in the pri-



vacy of their own homes.

Mr. Vachss also introduced me to a then-fledgling organization: Protect. The good news is that Protect is the first-ever political lobby for abused and neglected kids. Created with the help of Mr. Vachss, it consists of an impressive panel of political, psychiatric, and social work experts. Their basis isn't feel-good rhetoric, but results. As of this writing, they've had unilateral success in North Carolina, Arkansas, Illinois, and Virginia by overturning incest laws – or blocking attempts to weaken them – that were still on the books.

I'm in favor of direct aggression against those who are strip-mining kids of their early innocence, who are treating their kids with less respect and attention than their TVs and car rims. The punk rocker in me wants vengeance and retribution. But I'm no vigilante. I'm not going to put on some tights, get a cape, stealth around at night with a billy club, and whack child molesters on the head. One of the largest reasons I continue to rebel against society at large is, partially, because I believe there has to be a better way. We need to rip away the weeds. No two ways around it; people who fuck kids should pay dearly. These adults are diseased. Kids just don't have the mental faculty to handle sexual relationships so early on in life. If the adult needs therapy, fine. However, they shouldn't be put in a place next to kids – especially their own – until they're healed.

Here was my thinking about Protect. There had to be a nationwide group set up, like the National Rifle Association, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, or the thirty-five million members of AARP, but for protecting kids. If there are political membership organizations set up solely around the right to bear arms, against the clubbing of baby seals, and for folks over fifty years old, there had to be a

Are Declarations of War

group that protected kids with the same types of political headlocks and muscled threats while fighting for a good cause. I looked for a group that didn't merely parrot "family values," but actually stepped up to the legislative plate, played some hardball, and wasn't afraid of cracking some skulls. I don't like wasting time.

I got in contact with Grier Weeks, one of the head organizers for Protect and asked him what main goals the organization would like to realize. "Our first major goal is 50,000 members, a thousand per state. It would be enough members to support our core functions." Grier's passion to his work is undeniable. His vision of the future, admirable. "My personal goal before I die is I want to see us with more members than the NRA. I think if four million people care so strongly about their gun rights that they'll join and carry a card and be serious about protecting what you're interested in, then I know we have more than that."

Let's look at a couple of the points that connect politics, politicians, and nuts and bolts children's rights. Why don't politicians abolish incest outright? Why is a member organization like Protect necessary? Won't things just iron themselves out? Two things get a politician's attention, and they oscillate in importance. The first is money. That is why corporations, such as MGM/Mirage, gave \$1,987,308 in federal political contributions in the 2000 electoral cycle to politicians. Give a lot of money and you've got a politician's ear. The second is a deliverable block of votes. The sad fact is that lawmakers aren't in office for the betterment of society. As a matter of fact, they rarely do much policy making unless someone very powerful, or an organization they take seriously, forces them to consider their chances at re-election. Think about it. Why would politicians change existing laws if no one were paying attention to them? Why would they jeopardize the time they have for higher profile, quicker yield projects and substitute them with a cause whose effects probably won't be felt for a generation? It's also widely known that kids can't vote. Folks who have traditionally picked up the "children's issues" banner weren't politically savvy and they didn't have clout. Grier puts in bluntly. "If you want to know why, politically, this is the situation, it's because, one, there has never been any serious reward for politicians to do the right thing by these kids, and, two, there's never been any serious consequences if they don't."

Let me make a short aside right here. This is one of a few issues that's truly non-partisan. Democrats and Republicans, as political

"In 1981 the [California] Legislature passed a law that should rank high in a legal Hall of Shame, granting probation for people who molest children within their own families. The idea in those legislators' minds 20 years ago was that a family should stay together, and that packing a parent off to prison wasn't in the child's best interests ... one wonders what on earth those legislators could have been thinking. If anything, the scales should be tipped toward heavier punishment of molesters within a family than those without."

—The Recorder, June, 2002

parties, are as equally guilty with their lip service concerning children's rights while virtually ignoring the actual laws that can legally safeguard kids. If kids are getting fucked, I don't care if the donkey and the elephant are pointing at one another, assessing culpability. The goal here is protecting our future, not partisan politics blaming one another for society's largest failure.

Recently, in California, three senators – this time, Democrats – killed the proposed Battin Bill, which was formulated to overturn a twenty-three year policy that treats kids much like livestock. As of this writing, it is still in California's laws to encourage an Orwellian form of "family unification" by tossing the child right back into the hands that abused them in the first place. How sacred is the "family unit," when the family's got someone inhuman in it? How backwards is this policy of maintaining the "family unit," above a blatant cycle of abuse? Grier punctuates all of this with a sobering statistic. "Eighty to ninety percent of children who are sexually abused say that they know their abuser."

From the beginning, the punk rocker in me liked Grier, and it was easy to see why.

"Let's face it," he said, regarding Protect, "we're the avengers. We're the people who are pissed off and our members get it. Most people don't like bullies. They don't like people who prey on other people, and preying on children is a declaration of war against the rest of us, the people who care." When I asked him about punk rockers specifically – what could they do to make a tangible difference in Protect – his answer was right on the money. "Here's something where I think punk rockers can be really different from, say, yuppie baby boomers. America has a political disease of self-absorbed people who choose their

political causes like they're buying things in a boutique. In the political world, you've got to be really clear or you're not going to be taken seriously as players. What I would say to anybody that's reading this is that you've got to focus on what's important to you and your power will be magnified exponentially."

What about the adage that punk rockers can't change anything, they even have a hard time changing their underwear? Where does the rubber hit the road and the first steps to real change begin? Grier had another answer that rang true, one that reminded me of the DIY spirit, where bands don't give two shits about "good career moves." "Well, I'll tell you what, punks are leading the way. We put out the call with this Music for Protect program, and it's interesting that a bunch of anarchists would be the first to step up, because I guess they don't need to be micro-managed."

That's where this ends. You can either stay on the sidelines, bitching and complaining out of one side of your mouth that the world sucks and nothing you do will make a lick of difference, while doing nothing to improve your situation, or you can put your talents to good use. If you're a musician, look into the Music for Protect program. If you're a writer, tell other folks about Protect. If you just go out and enjoy punk rock, the very least you can do is join Protect. The more, the better, because, as Grier put very succinctly, "Look, 750,000 people belong to PETA, and until more people join, we're just pissing in the wind."

Grier's talking directly to you. Protect's got the heart, brains, and experience. All it needs now is more political muscle. Protect isn't a charity, and neither is our responsibility to kids. Visit <www.protect.org> to find out more. Hopefully, you'll become a member and join in on the fight. ■

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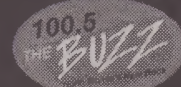
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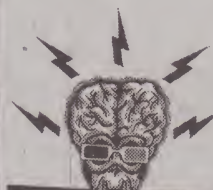
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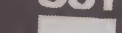
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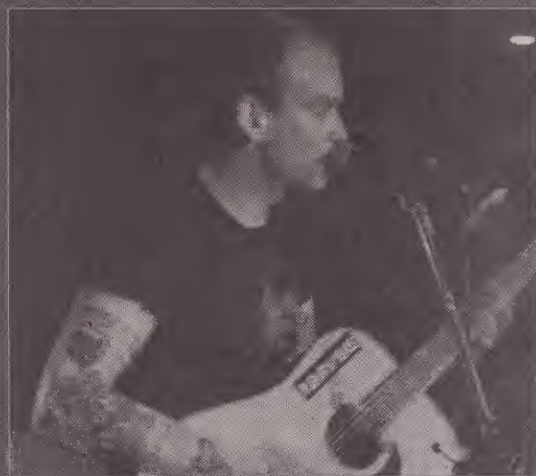
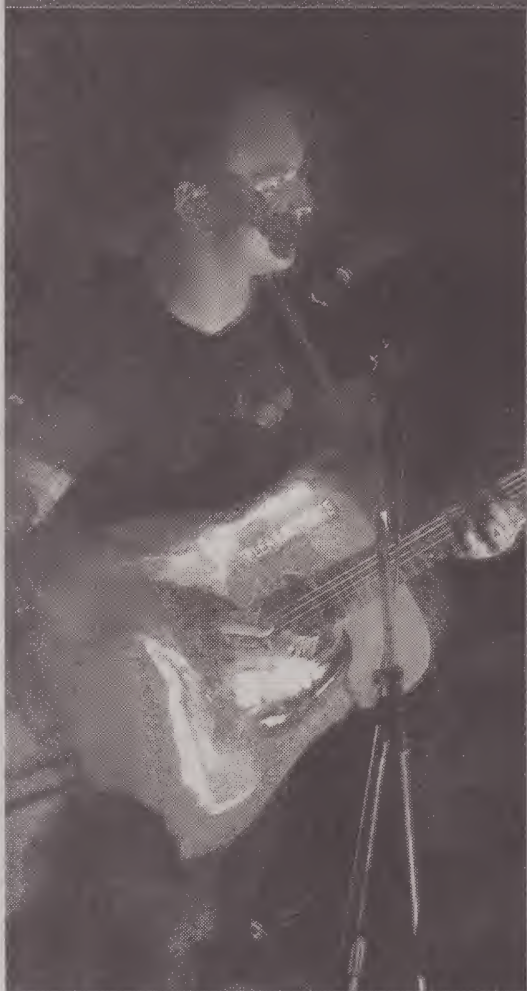


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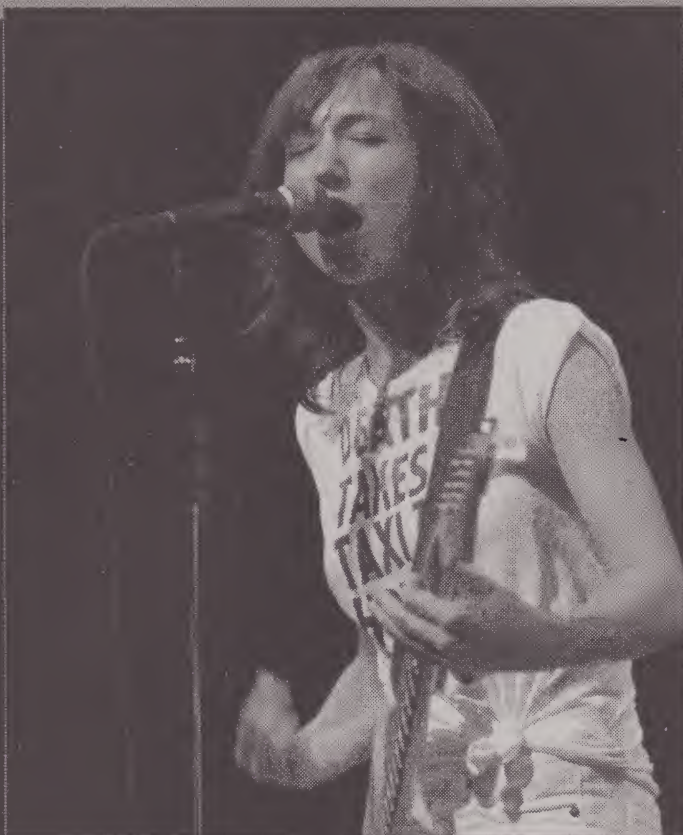
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AROUND THE WORLD WITH SAHARA HOTNIGHTS



By Don Sili / Live Photos By John Joh

Sahara Hotnights are the latest Swedish export making noise throughout the music world. The all-girl punk combo are buzzing all over the globe with their sexy femme style and big middle finger attitude that rocks with a vintage pop-punk sound and resonates with the snarled lipped attitude of The Runaways and catchy sex appeal of the Go-Go's.

Their latest album, "Kiss & Tell" on RCA Records delivers upbeat sing-along tunes yet offers a deliberate back-handed angst. "I usually imagine the worst case scenario of what can happen to my life and then I write it down," says Maria Andersson, the band's fiery lead singer. "That's why I like

it. I like the fact that we make these catchy, upbeat songs and then have cynical lyrics."

The first single "Hot Night Crash" fits the mold perfectly. "It's one of those classic relationship themes," explained Andersson. "It's a good catchy song, a good concert song and is cynical as hell."

Rounded out with sisters Jennie and Johanna Asplund and Josephine Forsman, Sahara Hotnights are hoping that their third album will



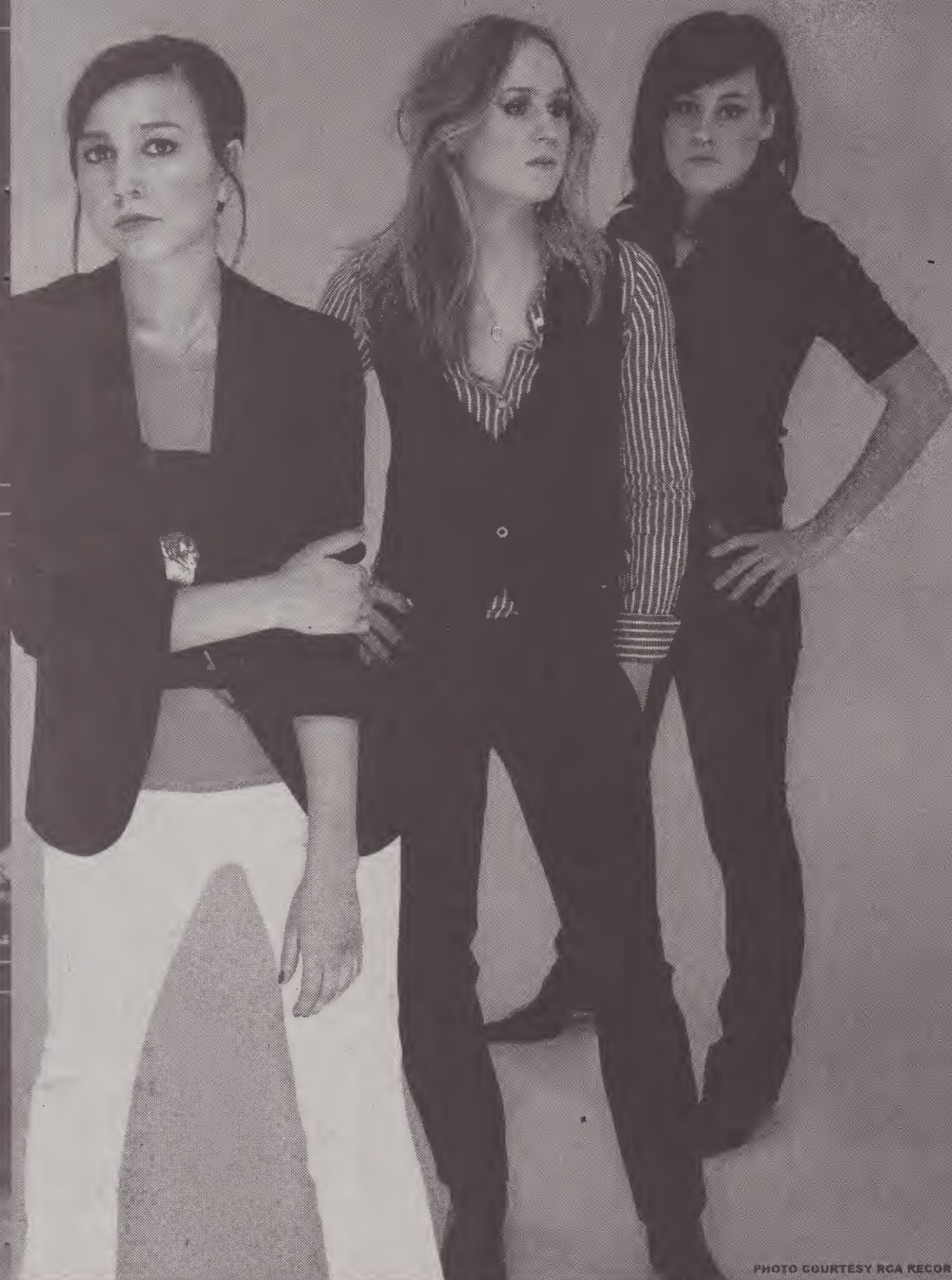


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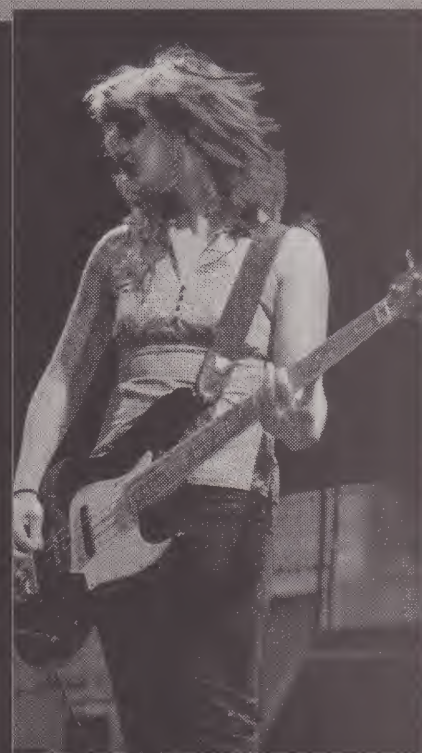
catapult them to the next level of the pop-punk chain making them as recognizable with rock n' roll as and as synonymous with Sweden as

meatballs.

The girls recently came off a U.S. tour with The Hives and AMP caught up with sexy singer, Maria Andersson, and

rapped about the ups and downs of life on the road and earning their bones across the globe.

How important is it



"...it's great to tour here and come over because there's a long tradition of rock musicians and great clubs and that's kind of special."

to make it in America?

Umm... I don't know how important it is. People always assume that it's the main priority to actually break in the U.S. but it's... I mean it's great to tour here and come over because there's a long tradition of rock musicians and great clubs and that's kind of special. But, to me



it doesn't matter if we break in Greenland or wherever.

What is the biggest difference between the Swedish music scene as opposed to anywhere else?

Well, it's hard to say because we've been around Sweden for a long, long time and it's such a different thing for us to go back home and play where people know all about you and know all the old songs. We can't shock people the same way as we do the

rest of the world.

How are the audiences over there?

A lot of foreign bands always say that the Swedish crowds are very good... they lift us a lot; they get a feeling for you.

Now, as you travel across the world you are earning a fan base across the globe.

It's a good thing, yeah... I like it. [laughs]

Well tell me what it's like, I mean I have no idea and never will.

What's it like to leave your country, go across the world and have people knowing who you are and singing along to your songs?

[Laughs] It's very fascinating. I mean, I don't know what else to say. It's cool. [Laughs]

Does terrorism concern you when you're on the road?

We don't think about it too much. I mean when it blows up on me then of course I'll be more concerned [Laughs].

Once we were supposed to drive over this bridge in New York that there was supposed to be a bomb on.

Really?

Yeah, and we just took another bridge and we were alright.

When was that?

I guess it was when we toured there in the Fall, a few years ago.

Did they have a check point at the bridge or something?

I don't really remember



how it all happened really...We had a lot of weird things happen on that tour. That was when the sniper in D.C. was on the loose and we were traveling in that area and the police were looking for a white van and that was exactly what we were traveling in. It was kind of scary. We took cover whenever we stopped for gas.

That's funny though. It's amusing to how the American magazines jump on things like that.

They give you tips on how you should walk on the sidewalks and stuff.

We tend to get a little paranoid over here.

I suppose. [Laughs]

You guys have been playing the new songs on tour. How have the crowds been responding to the new stuff?

Oh man, they've been all singing along everywhere we go.

Here you are, four good-looking girls, out on the road, on

stage. You must have men swarming you all the time. Tell me what goes on behind the scenes.

I guess some guys tend to be kind of desperate about it. They basically try to hang on us but we pry them off rather quickly. [Laughs]


Do you enjoy traveling like this?

Yeah. This is the first tour where we traveled during the night in a bus. Before this we only did a van and that was much more hard work. It's bet-

ter because we're not exhausted from driving all day.

What's the goals?

We don't really talk about that too much. We just talk about what are we gonna do next week. We don't worry about what can happen or what will happen, you know, we just do what we do and take it with each day. Basically, we just hope that this new album sells more than the last one. [Laughs].

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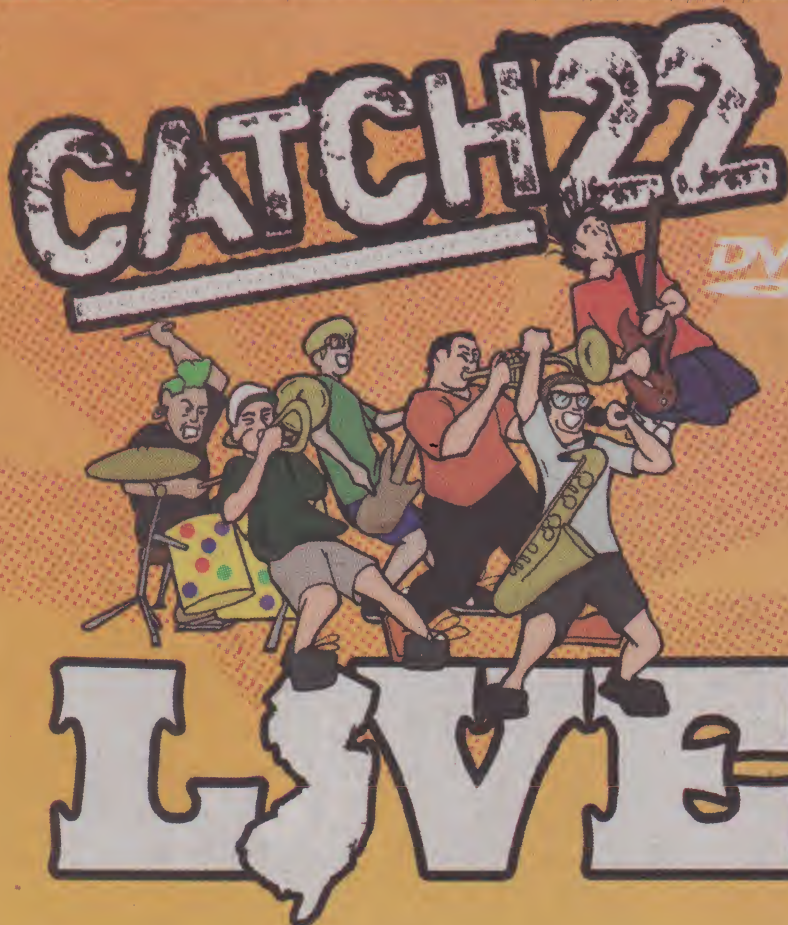


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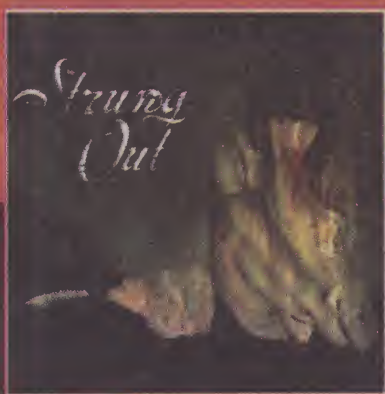
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Photo By Leslie Van Stelten

HAWTHORNE HEIGHTS

AMP 39



Photo By Jon Willoughby

"WE HAVE THREE GUITAR PLAYERS, SO RATHER THAN HAVING THEM ALL PLAY THE SAME THING, WHICH WOULD BE POINTLESS, WE HAVE THEM LAYER THEIR PARTS SO THAT EACH ONE IS DOING SOMETHING DIFFERENT."

"Yes, definitely," it was a deliberate approach, according to Hawthorne Heights' Eron. "We have three guitar players, so rather than having them all play the same thing, which would be pointless, we have them layer their parts so that each one is doing something different."

Also, as I mentioned, the band's music is layered in its entwining of melodies and musical aggression. One would think such might be difficult to pull off, but not so says Eron. "We just try to incorporate all of our different influences and they include heavy music and melodic music." Truly a blessing for the listeners out there.

But you still have to wonder about the process of putting together heavy crunching and heady melody. Surely snags hit from time to time, right? "Sometimes parts might feel forced a little," Eron said. "In the event that, that happens

By Kristofer Todd Upjohn

IT'S CERTAINLY SAFE TO SAY HAWTHORNE HEIGHTS HAS accomplished a respectable level of intricacy with their music, what with the multi-layered emocore the band plays. Consider the layers of music emanating from the THREE guitar players and the dual vocals from dual vocalists that combine clean and screaming sing styles.

we'll usually work on transitioning the parts better or even rewriting a part to fit with the one prior to it."

But apparently dead ends haven't manifested a whole lot: "We haven't really scrapped much."

For those aforementioned influences blending together in Hawthorne Heights' music, the band reaches into some diverse places. Just ask Eron. "I think Quicksand is a great model for bands who wish to blend heavy and melody," he said, but get this, "Foo Fighters/Nirvana to an extent also." While I was at it, I decided to feel Eron out a bit about the modern music scene in general. Melody merged with aggression is arising more and more and seems to be the trend. I think so, anyway. Eron agrees, but "how long it lasts, who knows?" One could address the fact that there are certain risks of blending what are basically hardcore / metalcore and emo styles, given that there's a lot of hatred among the moshers for the emo scene, and vice versa, and so on. One could address the fact ... and I did. What about all those HH listeners out there? Anyone pissed off? "It really depends on the person and how open-minded they are," Eron shared. "Dag Nasty was years ahead of their time as far as melody was concerned but people eventually caught on to what they were doing and dug it. Sometimes it just takes time. New is often scary." Eloquently put.

While we're on the topic of this musical dichotomy, I found myself curious just which side of the fence conjures more fans for Hawthorne Heights. According to Eron, the emo



Photo By Anna Perry



Photo By Anna Perry

“REGARDLESS OF ALL THESE SUB-GENRES THAT PEOPLE LIKE TO USE, WE’RE A ROCK BAND. WE HAVE HARDCORE ELEMENTS, WE HAVE EMO ELEMENTS, AND WE HAVE POP ELEMENTS. WHEN WE WRITE OUT SONGS, WE DON’T SAY, ‘OK, WE HAVE TO WRITE A HARDCORE SONG’ OR ‘WE NEED TO SOUND EMO.’”

wins this match. “I’d say we get a few more fans from the emo scene than the heavy scene. Maybe like a 60/40 split. One person buys something from us (and) might be wearing an Every Time I Die shirt and the next one a Thursday or Taking Back Sunday shirt.” Eron also turns out to be modest. What with all the things going on in a Hawthorne Heights song, a member of the band should certainly be entitled to some bragging rights

about song complexity and such things. Not Eron. “I don’t think (our music is) very complex. We’re a post-hardcore band with pop song structures.

There aren’t many time changes or anything like that. Despite the layered guitars and vocal harmonies, I’d say we’re pretty straight-ahead.” Well, if you look at it that way...

With such willingness to explore different ways of writing a song, the horizon comes to mind. As in, what’s on the

other side? What does the future hold? Any more experimentation waiting in the wings? “Quite possibly,” Eron said, spurring the hopes of Post-hardcore fans everywhere. “We’ll always expand our music and bring in new influences. I doubt our next album sounds exactly like this one.” (Musical evolution is important, yo!) “We might make things heavier in parts or poppier in others ... we’ll see.”

Influences, influences, influ-

ences. I keep hearing about these things. So, tell me, Eron, just who are some of these influences for you? Who’d you grow up jamming to?

“I grew up listening to a lot of old school hardcore. Everything from early DC stuff to 1988 youth crew stuff. I was also big on early/mid-90s post-hardcore and old school revival stuff simply because that’s what was happening in hardcore when I grew up. You can’t go wrong with Ten Yard Fight



“[INFLUENCES?] CLASSIC ROCK, INDIE ROCK OR OLD SCHOOL HARDCORE... BECAUSE I GREW UP WITH THAT STUFF.”

hardcore elements, we have emo elements, and we have pop elements. When we write out songs, we don't say, 'OK, we have to write a hardcore song' or 'we need to sound emo.' I wasn't all that surprised by Eron's list of "surprising" music he likes. However, I was surprised by what he would play if it was something other than the styles he's wading neck deep in now. "Classic rock, indie rock or old school hardcore," he said. OK, maybe that last one isn't so surprising, but ... "I'm a big fan of Led Zeppelin. John Bonham is my biggest influences." Geez, another influence, and what an interesting one! "Indie rock, because I'm totally into new bands like Muse, The Killers and Franz Ferdinand. Old school hardcore because I grew up with that stuff."

And, as always, I give my poor, unsuspecting interviewees a chance at final comments: "Thank you for the interview. If you don't have our CD ("Silence in Black and White"/ Victory Records), please go pick it up. If you do, please make a friend go pick it up!"

What do they do with it after they pick it up and what is it doing on the ground, anyway ... just kidding. Later! ☛

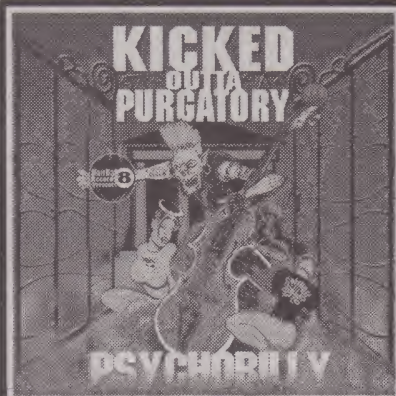
and Floorpunch!" Anything your fans might find surprising? (I love that question.) "I'd say the old school hardcore stuff. In Phoenix I had a long conversation with this punk rock kid about old school hard-

core and oi and he was totally taken off guard that this guy in this 'emo' band knew all the bands he liked and was giving him suggestions on other stuff to check out."

OK, you read it. He called

Hawthorne Heights an "emo" band. But does Eron really categorize HH anywhere particularly? Where? Hmmmm....

"Regardless of all these sub-genres that people like to use, we're a rock band. We have



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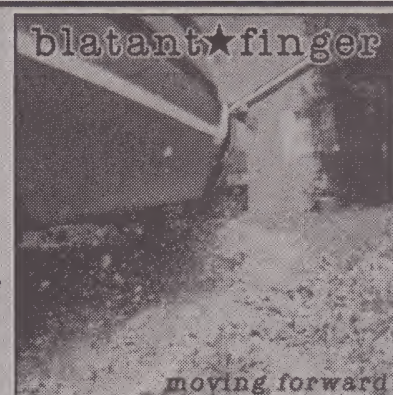
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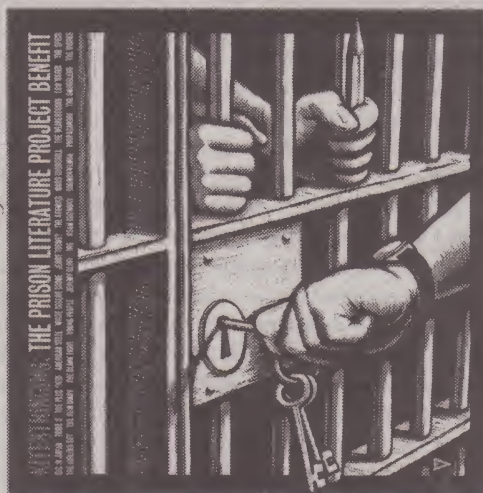
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RUSS RANKIN

SEPTEMBER ENTRY: CHURCH AND STATE

Three weeks into a tour; a tour which has covered much of the Midwest and the south - you know, those rich, wholesome bastions of Americana one rarely encounters living in the buffered culture of coastal California. West Virginia, South Carolina, Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana - places like that.

There are many things I could say, numerous observations I've made but, for this West Coast gringo, the strangest phenomenon is the rampant fundamentalism one finds oneself immersed in out here. It is everywhere; dripping off the white hot tin roofs of the trailer parks and echoing off the walls of the truck stops. The dreary backdrop of patriotic kitsch carefully woven into all the countless country tunes which seem to permeate one's existence in this nether region; the endless parade of "American pride" t-shirts and bumper stickers...the list goes on ad nauseum.

The ironic thing about it all to me is that the parts of America which have been so squarely left behind seem to be the areas where a causeless, general and puzzling "pride" in America appears to be the most rampant. Why aren't these people mad as hell about the unnecessary circumstances they often find themselves in? Why aren't they clamoring for a more equal distribution of life's blessings or, at the very least, the basic amenities of human life? The country they are so fiercely proud of has left them high and dry, jobless, without health care and without the means to advance their positions and which is, even now, using their hard-earned tax dollars to wage immoral and illegal wars throughout the globe. One would think these people would be livid; registering in droves to vote out the current administration or, at the very least, protesting the waste of billions of American dollars on needless wars when they could be building schools or raising the standard of living here at home.

Strangely enough, however, just the opposite is true. Everywhere I look I see flags waving tattered in front of broken down homes, empty, pro-America slogans screened on soiled, double-wide t-shirts and "support the troops" seems to outweigh "feed, house and educate America" as the prevailing sentiment. In parts of the country where the current administration has virtually pulled the collective rug out from under these honest, hard-working people, every other rusted out car sports a "Bush-Cheney '04" sticker.

Has the government finally perfected the art of control to the extent that they can strip a people of every last dignity, of all fundamental rights only to have these same people pour out their misguided adulation for this very government at every opportunity? Is this some twisted, domestic version of the "Stockholm syndrome?" Where is the anger? Where is the dissent? Why are we so eager to settle for meaningless slogans and patriotic minutia in place of real solutions for the majority of Americans who weren't born with a silver spoon in their mouths? I suppose it isn't a stretch, having been out here and witnessed the general feelings of what we fondly refer to as "middle America," to assume that our level of denial is so huge that we would rather believe than to question; we would rather settle for our lot in life than to struggle for more social justice and we seem more

interested in who's getting kicked off "survivor island" than whether or not the united states had a case for war in Iraq. The theme of our national consciousness appears to be "don't rock the boat."

But wait a minute... wasn't America founded by rocking the proverbial boat? Hasn't every advancement in our history risen out of questioning the status quo? How then did we arrive at such an impasse - at a place in our history where we seem to be entirely willing to be walked on by the wealthy elite and to have even our most basic human rights stripped from us so long as we can watch NASCAR and go to Walmart a few times a week. It is, I think, the beginning of the end of America. Our cultural landscape has become so barren and rehearsed that the true patriot - the man who is willing to sacrifice so others can survive and question the prevailing logic no matter the personal cost - has no leg to stand on.

And in the midst of it all we have god. Chomsky once called it an historical rule that, as a civilization flourished and became industrialized, the levels of religious fundamentalism went down; that it was almost an incremental phenomenon and had been proven throughout history. Given this model, the United States appears to be a stark anomaly. We pride ourselves on being the wealthiest and most technologically advanced nation on earth yet the level of rampant fundamentalism here rates us with devastated, third world peasant countries. We tease and belittle Muslim nations but are we really any better? How often do our current leaders throw religious terms around and treat them as law? Is our freedom of religion in America a hoax? Are the atheists and infidels the next to be rounded up and shipped off to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba? there seems to be a new tide of frightening, McCarthy-esque witch hunting going on in this country wherein our national agenda appears to be increasingly linked to a small minority's interpretation of the new testament and where the once-sacred separation of church and state has become a blurry line of nationalistic rhetoric tailor made for the bumper stickers and t-shirts available everywhere from your local Walmart to the truck stop on I-40.

CONSPIRACIES ARE FUN!

Ok, raise your hand if you think the Bush administration knows precisely where Osama bin Laden is and has for some time. Hell, for all we know he could have spent the last several months chilling in the Lincoln bedroom playing Tony Hawk on X-Box just waiting to be paraded before a salivating press corps a week or so before the November election guaranteeing a re-election party for his old friend George. I mean, the White House was able to spirit the rest of his family out of the country undetected so what's to stop them from jet-tisoning one solitary dude under cover of night following the week long piss up at the Crawford ranch? Osama can enjoy a simple life in the witness relocation program detailing Porsches in Rapid City or cutting hair in Monroe, Mississippi.

Anyone else suspicious of the way our festive, color-coded national alert system always seems to flare up on the heels of any good news for the Democratic party? John Kerry announces John Edwards as his running mate... BAM! Terror alert! And then, just this past week, after a powerful and compelling Democratic National Convention... BAM! Terrorists are seemingly everywhere! Convenient, right?

Anyway, that's quite enough out of me. Until next time... ☞

RUSS RANKIN

OCTOBER ENTRY: STUCK ON SPIN

So I'm watching MSNBC (as I'm prone to doing in the mornings) when I'm struck, yet again, at how subjective this whole business of TV news is. I began to wonder just how many people watching it really thought about the process this information goes through before it reaches them; before it becomes the window through which we, as Americans, view the rest of the world and, ultimately, ourselves. Are we conscious of it? Do we question or blindly accept? Some of the subtleties of this mass deception are so minute, so barely perceptible that one might chalk it up to no more than an overactive imagination or too much Dead Kennedys' music in the formative years but I believe it's there and I believe it is calculated.

Let me explain. It's much easier to see the government's hand in coverage of things like the recent Iraq invasion. The "embeds," reporters who are battle dressed and in the field with the soldiers. A brilliant public relations move by the pentagon since these reporters will invariably want to color their reporting in shades favorable to the current administration's activities since they are now seemingly dependent on these soldiers for their survival. Hardly a method of providing balanced or impartial reporting but damn if it wasn't some entertaining television! And what about the personalities in front of the network cameras in the studios? Was the conflict ever treated as an illegal invasion of a sovereign nation which posed no threat to the United States? Of course not. There were flags and dramatic music and catch phrases like "Iraqi freedom" thrown around. Always the U.S. had to be portrayed as the benevolent force fighting the good fight. Was this news reporting or was it the gentle dissemination of a very clear doctrine?

One thing I've noticed repeatedly on MSNBC and FOX (maybe others but I have seen it on these two networks) is a subtle belittling of the audience by the network personalities. Like patient teachers speaking to a room full of learning-impaired children, they speak slowly and emphatically, often looking to their co-star for either a grave nod of agreement or a chuckle of condescension as the case requires. Over and over again stories are lead by one of the on air personalities saying "of course we're talking about..." as if we would be idiotic to think that there was anything else worth talking about or that anything other than the party line is what's going on. For instance, "of course we're talking about that Orlando woman who chewed off her husband's foot," so the viewer is compelled to believe that this story has specific value over and above another. In this way we are subtly led sheep-like to a myriad of pre-ordained conclusions about the world in general and events unfolding in it specifically. Check it out - you'll see what I mean.

The only thing better than an illegal war to bring out the spin is a presidential election. The networks, emboldened I can only imagine by repeated evidence that we are a passive, unquestioning people, have become so brash that the other day I watched an MSNBC poll tracking the presidential race which showed the current president with a one percent lead on his closest challenger, Sen. John Kerry, only to hear, not a minute later, the television anchor say, "So now let's see what the

President will do with this big lead in the polls on John Kerry." It was 1%. A "big lead?" BAM! Spin! Now, in the eyes of the viewer, the president has a big lead. It happens just that way everyday. This isn't even mentioning the fact that there are several other people running for president who aren't even acknowledged on the news or shown in any polls. David Cobb (the Green Party candidate for President) has challenged John Kerry to weekly televised debates. To me it sounds interesting and democratic and fairly news-worthy. Why haven't we heard about it? Also, Cobb recently debated the Libertarian candidate and it was aired days later on C-Span. Again, not a peep from the corporate-owned media.

It would seem that networks like FOX and MSNBC are more in the business of doctrine than actual news. There are stories and ways to report them which perpetuate and endorse the current administration's stranglehold on the American conscience and then there are those which don't. Those which don't serve entrenched power are conveniently ignored or belittled while the "good" stories are managed and spun and allowed to wash over us in wave after wave of pro-corporate American doctrine.

FOUR MORE YEARS!!

Looking at any aspect of the current president's track record it stands to reason that only in a society fat with doctored news could an administration this inept even still be in the hunt for a second term. Little league baseball coaches have been fired for less catastrophic mismanagement! Listening to the president speak (a painful thing in and of itself) it is amazing that he isn't laughed off the podium. There is not one single issue of American life that has improved since he took office. Not one.

The Federal deficit under the current administration is a whopping \$2.3 trillion dollars. When he took office there was a \$5.6 trillion dollar surplus! Now, I'll be the first to admit, I'm no economist - hell, I can barely balance my checkbook - but isn't this a BAD thing? Shouldn't we be upset about it? Do we see it on the news? No. We see the President shaking hands, playing golf, and stumbling through speech after speech in which he outlines his plans for "more of the same." Yikes!

Now I won't ever be mistaken for a Clinton fan but check this out: during his administration there were 21 million jobs created in the U.S. That's pretty good right? I mean, a lot of people were still out of work but it was a step in the right direction at least. Anyone want to guess how many jobs have been created under the current administration? Actually none. In fact, over 1.2 million jobs have been lost! Way to go Mr. President! Who votes for this guy? It's pathetic. Oh but there's more!

The president has a plan for cutting our taxes. Sounds good right? But wait a minute, upon further review here is the average tax break for you, me and the other 60% of Americans who are at or near the bottom of the earning curve: a whopping \$350 dollars. Hey don't spend it all in one place you hear? Ok now for the average tax break for the top 1% of earners (the elite - or, as the President calls them, his "base") under the Bush plan: \$96,634 dollars! Wow! Good to have friends in high places I guess.

I could go on. Remember the "no child left behind" act? Apparently the president doesn't since his administration underfunded it by \$9.4 billion dollars in 2004. ☞



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Death From Below

Metal Scene News, Interviews, & Reviews By Kirby Urrest

>Headlines

>New Jersey's Sever The Fallen have decided to break up once and for all. Formed in 1998, the group has released material with Tribunal Records. Here is a statement from the band: "Time for some news. The last news from Sever The Fallen. Yes, that's right, STF has come to the end. We felt that we were not where we wanted to be with STF due to the many lineup changes halting the progress of the band. There are no hard feelings and we are still great friends. It has been six fun years and will not be forgotten. Thank you to everyone who supported us, people we met at shows, Tribunal Records, other bands we played with, and promoters. We have made a lot of new friends through this. We have seven unreleased songs which will be lost forever unless you've seen us live recently and recorded them. Anyone who has video clips of us from shows, please send them to us. The website will be up for a couple of months so post on the message board and give your thoughts. Who knows, you might be able to get a few of us back together for a new project."



>Italian melodic metallers Secret Sphere have completed pre-production for their new album, tentatively due in early 2005 through Nuclear Blast Records. With regards to the musical direction of the new material, Secret Sphere guitarist Aldo Lonobile writes on the group's web site, "We have changed a little bit once again, as in our style. But don't worry! I'm sure that the people who love the loud parts of 'Scent of Human Desire' [2003] will be satisfied and all the people that was asking for more speed songs will be satisfied too! This album contains probably the fastest songs ever written by Secret Sphere! Ramon [Messina] wrote some great vocal lines, I'm sure that most of the new chorus of this work will be stuck in your head after just one listen!

Antonio's [Agate] piano and orchestrations are very emotional, he tried also some new tips and sounds, the result is really interesting. The rhythm parts? Definitely metal! Dave's [Simeone] drum parts also fit very well with Andy's playing! Well...how about the guitars?! :)) Paco [Gianotti] and I have given to you the heaviest Secret Sphere riffs yet!" In other news, Secret Sphere's debut album, "Mistress of the Shadowlight" (1999), will be re-released in Japan through Avalon/Marquee Inc. Records. The new version of the CD will include several bonus tracks and the group's entire "Between Story & Legend" demo.

>Nodes Of Ranvier are currently at home writing material for their next album. The effort will likely be recorded this winter and should hit stores in April 2005 through Facedown Records.

>Mortician, Akercocke and Vehemence will be teaming up for a U.S. tour beginning in late September. Confirmed dates so far are as follows:

Oct. 09 - San Francisco, CA - The Pound SF (w/ Impaled)
Oct. 11 - Portland, OR - Conan's
Oct. 12 - Seattle, WA - The Catwalk
Oct. 17 - St. Paul, MN - Station 4 (w/ The Chasm, Anal Blast, Teratism)
Oct. 18 - Chicago, IL - Joe's (w/ The Chasm, Manticore)
Oct. 19 - Cincinnati, OH - Sudsy Malone's (w/ Manticore, Estuary)

>North Carolina-based doom/death metallers Daylight Dies have completed the songwriting process for their as-yet-untitled sophomore album. "The finishing touches and details are being added to all songs and the band will soon book studio time," the band wrote on their website. "There are eight songs in total with all the material clocking in a bit under one hour in length. The song titles, album title and more details on the album will be revealed very shortly." Daylight Dies, who recently announced the addition of vocalist Nathan Ellis (formerly of Wehrwolfe) to the group's ranks, "looks forward to finally recording an album all have worked hard on and reigniting the momentum that began with [2003's] 'No Reply'."

>Swedish death metallers Vomitory have abandoned their vocalist search and will carry on as a four-piece. "The interest for the vocal job has been great but we haven't found what we've been looking for," the band write on their web site. "So we reconsidered our situation and looked upon it from different perspectives and came to the obvious conclusion that we are going to change nothing! We believe that Vomitory has never sounded better than we do now, so why fix something that isn't broken?" Vomitory's fifth album, "Primal Massacre", was released in April through Metal

Blade Records. The follow-up to 2002's "Blood Rapture" was recorded at Studio Kuling in Örebro, Sweden with producer Henrik Larsson and was mixed at Berno Studio.



>On Tuesday, September 7, In Flames will play a small show at Sticky Fingers in Gothenburg. It will be a very special evening and something you'll never see again. Everything will be recorded for the upcoming In Flames DVD. Limited tickets so get there in time

>According to Pollstar.com, the confirmed dates for the Fear Factory, Lamb of God, Children of Bodom and Throwdown tour are as follows:

10/07/04 Tremont Music Hall @ Charlotte, NC
10/08/04 Station Square @ Pittsburgh, PA Rock Club
10/09/04 Harpo's @ Detroit, MI
10/10/04 Odeon Concert Club @ Cleveland, OH
10/11/04 The NorVa @ Norfolk, VA
10/13/04 Roseland @ New York, NY
10/15/04 The Palladium @ Worcester, MA
10/16/04 The Trocadero / Balcony Bar @ Philadelphia, PA
10/19/04 House Of Blues @ Lake Buena Vista, FL
10/20/04 The Masquerade @ Tampa, FL
10/21/04 The Masquerade @ Atlanta, GA
10/23/04 Granada Theatre @ Lawrence, KS
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11/06/04 House Of Blues @ New Orleans, LA
11/08/04 Pop's @ Sauget, IL
11/09/04 House Of Blues @ Chicago, IL
11/10/04 The Rave / Eagles Club @ Milwaukee, WI
11/11/04 Al Rosa Villa @ Columbus, OH
11/14/04 Webster Theatre / Underground @

Hartford, CT

>Finland's Impaled Nazarene will record a live album in Italy between September 17 and September 19. The group will record three shows (Milan, Catania, Ascoli) with their sound engineer Tapio Pennanen and his assistant, Erkki Saviharju. "We are celebrating 15 years as a band next year so it is about fucking time to do a professional live CD which will also serve as a 'best-of' for those not so familiar with our material," the band write on their web site. "We are practicing total of 28 to 30 songs for the shows and the setlist will cover our whole career, including our 7" EPs!!!! The live CD will be mixed at Sonic Pump studios by Mr. Pennanen. An early 2005 release through Osmose Productions is expected. In other news, Impaled Nazarene's last album, "All That You Fear", which was issued last November through Osmose Productions, will receive a Brazilian release on September 25 through Haunted Records.

>Boston hardcore band Death Before Dishonor has now signed with Bridge Nine Records. Formed in 2001, the group has previously



released material with Spook City Records. Later this month they will enter The Outpost with Jim Siegel (Give Up The Ghost) to record eight new songs for a full-length, which should be available in early-2005.

>Legendary NWOBHM (New Wave of British Heavy Metal) band Satan recently had performed a one-off reunion show Friday (August 6) at Germany's Wacken Open Air festival. Satan's classic "Court In The Act" lineup (including Blitzkrieg singer Brian Ross and Skylad's Graeme English and Steve Ramsey) performed together at Wacken for the first time since 1984. A live recording from the group's early days, entitled "Live in the Act", is tentatively scheduled to be released later in the year. In related news, Blind Fury's only album, "Out of Reach" (1985), was re-released by Majestic Rock in early June. Blind Fury was essentially Satan with a different singer (Lou Taylor - vocals, Steve Ramsey - guitar, Russ Tippins - guitar, Graeme English - bass, Sean Taylor - drums).

>The following guest musicians will be appearing on MC Necro's new album, "The Pre-Fix For Death":

Jamey Jasta and Sean Martin of Hatebreed, #0 of Slipknot aka DJ Starscream (Sid Wilson), Trevor Perez of Obituary, Away of Voivod, Dan Lilker of Nuclear Assault,

S.O.D., Brutal Truth, and Danny Diablo of Crown of Thorns, Scarhead. Necro's official biography says the following: "Necro was born and raised in Brooklyn, NY, where he has lived his entire life. He has been writing and recording music since the late 80's, playing guitar in bands until 1990, where at the age of 13, he switched his interest toward hip hop. He began receiving recognition for his music as early as 1991, when he won a demo contest on the Stretch and Bobbito Radio Show in NYC. His appearances on this show and other radio shows over the next few years began to build NECRO a fan base before even releasing his first record. Since 1996, Necro has released a series of top 5 college radio singles, including his newest 12" release, "Bury You With Satan" which has reached number 1 ranking in two of the top trades. Necro has been performing live since the age of 11. Some of the groups he has opened for include Run DMC, Beatnuts, Sepultura, Kool Keith, Napalm Death and Biohazard. He has headlined sold-out shows in all of NYC's mid-sized venues such as Brownie's, Wetlands, The Knitting Factory & SOB's. A Necro headlining performance draws an average of 300-500 people in cities such as NYC, London, Chicago, Toronto, Providence, etc. Across the U.S., Necro can pack in 100-500 people depending on the state and region. Necro's live appeal continues to grow especially in New York City, where his shows have grown more turbulent with the audience stage diving and starting mosh pits."

>British Black metallers Anaal Nathrakh have announced through their website that their new album, 'Domine Non Es Dignus', will be released on November 2nd through Season Of Mist. As previously reported, the band recorded the album at Necrodeath Studios. The release will include the tracks 'Revaluation Of All Values', 'To Err Is Human', 'To Dream - Futile' and 'Procreation Of The Wretched', among others.

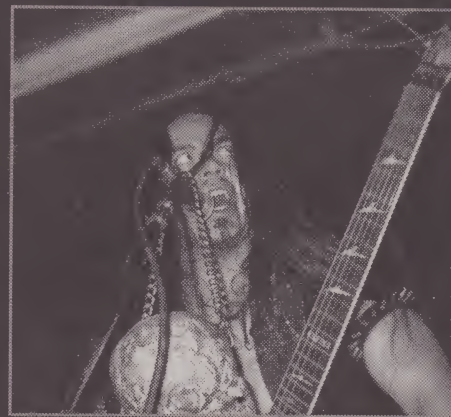
>Sweden's Evergrey are preparing to record a live DVD. Here is a posting from bassist Michael Hakansson on the band's official website:

Greetings Clan members,

On the 9th of October we will record our first Live DVD here in Gothenburg. We will for sure make this a night to remember. It will be the most glorious thing in Evergrey history and we feel that we want to have all of you there to help us make this night perfect. So all of you people from outside of Sweden who want to attend at this special night, send an email to me with the subject DVD and you will be put on a special guestlist for the show. Stay Grey and we'll see you on October 9th!

>Mexican deathcult metal lords The Chasm have completed work on their new album, entitled "The Spell Of Retribution" Here is a report from Earache Records' website:

Comprising 10 tracks with a running time of over 66 minutes, "The Spell of Retribution" represents The Chasm's most adventurous and ambitious project to date, and firmly sets them apart from the rest of the current Death Metal scene by incorporating purposely lengthy songs dealing with intricate



concepts close to the heart of frontman Daniel Corchado.

Recorded at Soto Sound Studios in Illinois and then mixed by Corchado at Lux Inframundis, the album's recording was not without its problems, including at one point a studio fire that set the schedule back and led to the album taking longer than anticipated to complete.

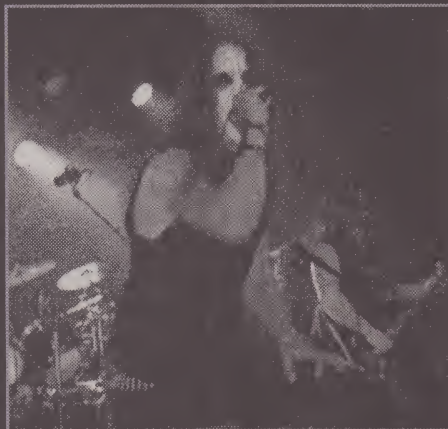
Commenting on the completion of his band's latest opus, Corchado says:

We are definitely very proud to announce the completion of this new chapter, the 7th, in The Chasm's odyssey, after almost 3 months of hard work in the studio and a schedule full of delays and problems. "The Spell of Retribution" has reached the end of its creative/constructive journey. Armed with a thick, darkened/heavy production, interwoven with what surely is our most complex and destructive material, "The Spell..." is for sure a lengthy and memorable piece of Darkened Heavy Metal that praises Death and certainly is not a one dimensional album, like so many infecting the scene nowadays.

We can assure the true believers of this Cult of Death, and to any fan and follower of this movement, who still feels the darkened flame of this music, that when you hear "The Spell..." you'll encounter a devastating experience, one full of unexpected turns and musical atmospheres presenting controlled chaos and the intense feeling of revenge and inner victory...

>Slayer frontman Tom Araya recently spoke to the Tucson Citizen about the group's July 11 show in Augusta, Maine which was recorded for an upcoming live DVD. The band, who played the 1986 album "Reign In Blood" from start to finish at the gig, were focused on just the final minute of "Raining Blood", the closing song on the 10-track record. "It's kind of like little kids waiting for a new toy. Here it comes. Here it comes," Araya said, laughing. "The effect we were trying to achieve only happens at the end of the album, the last minute...and when it happened, it was great." Araya was a bit cagey about the specifics of the special effect that made him so giddy, but he offered a clue. "The album title gives it away. It looked really, really cool." "Reign in Blood" was Slayer's third album and the first produced by Rick Rubin for his Def Jam label. Araya wants Rubin to produce Slayer's next album, which he hopes will see the band in the studio by the end of the year. "If not Rubin, someone like Rubin, who will work like Rubin. In other words, who will be a part of the

process," Araya said, adding that Rubin is very hands-on and acts, necessarily, like a "referee" for Slayer. Rubin was somewhat involved in the band's 2001 album, "God Hates Us All", in terms of financing and suggesting who should do the final mix. "He's got an ear for sounds and for talent ... to find people who are really good at what they do," Araya said.



>Swedish black metal kings Marduk have posted this message on their official website: Marduk is currently in the studio recording the new album. The album will be followed by a massive world tour that will start in december. The tour will proceed under the monicker Deathmarch 2004/2005. The European tour will be divided in 2 parts, the first in december and the 2nd part during spring 2005.

Here are the confirmed dates so far:

- Dec. 05 - Paris, FRA - La Locomotive
- Dec. 06 - Essen, GER - Zeche Carl
- Dec. 07 - Osnabruck, GER - Hyde Park
- Dec. 08 - Berlin, GER - Halford
- Dec. 09 - Prague, CZR - Lucerna Music
- Dec. 10 - Engelsdorf, GER - Hellraiser
- Dec. 11 - Wien, AUT - Planet Music
- Dec. 12 - Innsbruck, AUT - Hafen
- Dec. 13 - Milano, ITA - Transilvania
- Dec. 14 - Pratteln, SWI - Z7
- Dec. 15 - Ludwigsburg, GER - Rockfabrik
- Dec. 16 - Munster (Breitefeld), GER - Live Arena
- Dec. 17 - Strasbourg, FRA - La Laiterie
- Dec. 18 - Antwerpen, BEL - Hof Ter Loo
- Dec. 19 - Tilburg, NETH - 013

>Lacuna Coil's "Swamped" and Tiamat's "Cain" are among the full songs that will be used in the Activision video game "Vampire (The Masquerade) Bloodlines", due out this October. For more information, visit www.vampirebloodlines.com.

>Finnish goth-metallers To/Die/For are expected to enter Sonicimage studios in Kouvola, Finland soon to begin recording their new album, tentatively due in early 2005 through Spinefarm Records. The current To/Die/For lineup once again features vocalist Jape Perälä, who allegedly decided to reclaim the T/D/F name for his Tiaga project after being offered a record deal by Spinefarm Records. Joining Perälä in the new To/Die/For formation are guitarist Juppe "J.P." Sutela, ex-New Dawn Foundation drummer/ex-To/Die/For drum tech Santtu Lonka, guitarist Mika "Alli" Ahtiainen, ex-H.I.M./New Dawn Foundation keyboardist Juska Salminen,

and bassist Jarkko Strandman (ex-New Dawn Foundation). To/Die/For's most recent CD, "Jaded," was released in March 2003 through Spinefarm Records (Nuclear Blast in continental Europe). The follow-up to 2001's "Epilogue" featured guest vocals by former Sinergy and current Nightwish bassist/vocalist Marco Hietala.

>Sweden's Amon Amarth will release their new album, "Fate of Norns," as a limited-edition digipack featuring a bonus DVD "Amon Amarth live at Grand Rokk." The 45-minute disc will contain three-camera video footage of Amon Amarth performing live in Reykjavik, Iceland on March 5, 2004. "Fate of Norns" is scheduled for release on September 6 through Metal Blade Records. The follow-up to last year's "Versus The World," "Fate of Norns" (which refers to the three Norns - or "goddesses of fate" - Urd, Skuld and Verdandi, who, in Scandinavian mythology, sit at the root of Yggdrasil - the world tree - weaving the fate of every man) was recorded at Berno studio in Malmö, Sweden.

>Cleveland, Ohio hardcore/metal band Above This Fire has officially signed with Life Sentence Records. Formed in 2000, Above This Fire has previously self-released an EP. Meanwhile, the group will release their debut full-length in early-2005.



>Shadows Fall singer Brian Fair reportedly revealed at the group's New Orleans show on Thursday (July 29) that a fan passed away at the St. Petersburg concert the night before. The band dedicated the song "The Art of Balance" to him and his family. No further information is currently available. Shadow Fall's new album, "The War Within", is scheduled for release on September 21 through Century Media Records. The follow-up to the band's critically acclaimed disc, "The Art of Balance", was produced by Zeuss (Hatebreed) at Planet Z Studios in the band's home state of Massachusetts. "The War Within", the band's fourth full-length release, features 10 tracks of "sonic devastation" and is said to be the group's "most unrelenting, yet dynamic offering that further proves why they are the undisputed leaders of their genre."

>DISMEMBER, REPULSION, PUNGENT STENCH and EXTREME NOISE TERROR are among the bands confirmed for the Traumafest, a two-day festival scheduled to take place January 7-8, 2005 at Sala Divino Aqualung in Madrid, Spain. The following groups are currently scheduled to appear at the festival:

- DISMEMBER (Sweden)
- REPULSION (USA)
- MACABRE (USA)

- EXTREME NOISE TERROR (UK)
- PUNGENT STENCH (Austria)
- DEAD INFECTION (Poland)
- PIG DESTROYER (USA)
- FROMTHEASHES (Sweden)
- STRONG INTENTION (USA)
- WORMED (Spain)
- LOOKING FOR AN ANSWER (Spain)

More bands will be announced soon.



>In a brand-new pre-Ozzfest interview with Metal Edge magazine, Superjoint Ritual frontman Philip Anselmo was asked if much of the band's last album, "A Lethal Dose of American Hatred", was a response to the events of September 11, 2001. "Parts of it, for sure," Anselmo replied. "I think we got to do what we got to do, and unless you are making these particular decisions... I mean, yeah, we are a country, we are people who are allowed an opinion. 9/11 was a horrific thing, definitely the lowest point in American history, as far as us taking one on the chops. I cannot help but be sympathetic to families who lost people in that tragedy, on the planes and in the buildings. To every person who is anti-war, I have to point out the importance of us definitely showing a very, very strong front, not looking vulnerable, and also redeeming some of... I mean, Christ, look, we still have the death penalty. That's all I have to say. In a perfect society, none of that would have happened. There would be no 9/11, no executions, Christ, there would be no jails. But I'm just saying, if you fuck with the U.S., no matter what we do, you're going to have to pay at one point or another." Asked if he happened to see the footage of Nick Berg, an American contractor in Iraq that was executed, Anselmo said, "Oh yeah, that was miserable, man. I mean, they try and whatever, the interrogation pictures are humiliating and whatever, but me? If you want to know where Osama Bin Laden is, or where Saddam Hussein is, or where any of those crazy motherfuckers are, do what you must to get an answer. I know for a fucking fact that every other country, for the most part - especially in the Third World and the Middle Eastern countries - shows a lack of regard when it comes to human life and the value of it. I mean, I'm not saying 'Let's lower our standards to their level,' you know?! But we need to restore some order with authority, and if it is war that we have to endure, then so be it, if it's the only language they understand. Because they obviously are not privy to just stopping at our request, 'Knock this shit off, you motherfuckers!' You know, they have been warring since the beginning of time. Don't drag us into your shit. Maybe there's a question of us putting ourselves in there, but if you harbor these terrorists, and you damn well know about it, then you pay the fucking price as well. It's time to make a parking lot - put a flag in the ground and call it the United States of the Middle East. I mean, definitely... Fuck them! I mean, if you know the facts about the al Qaeda, they come across like a bunch of paranoid homosexual fucking Arabs, whatever the hell they are. The way they treat women and their entire attitude

towards the subject is homo, man. They fucking just seem gay. I mean, obviously people are great or shallow in one way or the other, it's men and women - but they are not doing themselves any favors by fucking humiliating every woman in sight. That's Hitler-type shit. That's dictator; fucking hatred right there. None of that floats. Nobody puts up with that shit. You're begging to get your ass blown-away."



>Prosthetic Records has officially signed Connecticut's Invocation Of Nehek. The band is currently finishing up work on their self-titled debut, which they began tracking on July 1st. Recording has been taking place at Blue Jay Recording Studio (Aerosmith, Billy Joel) in Carlisle, MA with Uneath guitarist Ken Susi producing.

>Norwegian newspaper Aftenposten is reporting that the restored stave church in Fantoft in Bergen, Norway has become a pilgrimage site for European black metal music fans who want to visit the site of the church-burning that Varg Vikernes (a.k.a. Count Grishnack) of the one-man band Burzum was suspected of carrying out. On the cover of the Burzum EP album "Aske" (Ashes) one can see a 1992 picture of the charred ruins of Fantoft stave church. Varg Vikernes is serving a sentence for murder and church burnings. Guide Arne Dyroy is not terribly thrilled about some of the new tourists to Fantoft. "The church has received unwelcome attention because of the 1992 fire and we have had visitors wearing T-shirts with pictures of the burnt ruins. This is very disrespectful," Dyroy said. Dyroy told NRK that many of the black metal tourists ask about Vikernes, and want to visit him in Bergen Prison. Torgim Oyre, music reviewer and assistant organizer of the annual Bergen metal festival Hole in the Sky, agrees that the Fantoft burning was a "classic event in Norwegian black metal history" but believes the pilgrimage is a phenomenon limited to "slightly nerdy" foreigners. Dyroy told NRK that he kept a watchful eye on the black metal tourist crowd. "As a rule they are very polite and easy-going but I am a bit on guard in case they try some kind of stunt," Dyroy said.

>New Orleans sludge-meisters CROWBAR have signed a worldwide deal with Candlelight Records. The group's new album, "Life's Blood For The Downtrodden", is expected to see a February 8, 2005 Stateside release date. Final studio work on the album, produced by the working team of Warren Riker (DOWN) and Rex Brown (PANTERA, DOWN), is planned in Miami August 14-September 1. Brown also handled the bass duties on the album, which marks a return to

the group's recording lineup of drummer Craig Nunenmacher (BLACK LABEL SOCIETY). Upon completion, it will be the CROWBAR's first studio album in over three years. As previously reported, CROWBAR's current touring lineup is as follows:

Kirk Windstein (DOWN) - Guitar and Vocals
Patrick Bruders (GOATWHORE) - Bass
Steve Gibb (ex-BLACK LABEL SOCIETY) - Guitar and Vocals

Tommy Buckley (SOILENT GREEN) - Drums
The follow-up to 2001's "Sonic Excess In Its Purest Form", "Life's Blood For The Downtrodden" is expected to feature the following track listing:

01. New Dawn
02. Slave No More
03. Angels Wings
04. Dead Sun
05. Strained
06. Holding Something
07. P.B.R.
08. Take All You've Known
09. Moon
10. The Violent Reaction

>According to online CD vendor CDXpress, a two-disc Iron Maiden DVD, entitled "Early Years", is scheduled for release in October 2004. The set, which will apparently feature Region 2 (PAL) encoding, is expected to include the following:

Disc One:

- * Concert - "Live at The Rainbow" (recorded in the early '80s; previously released on PMI video) - approximately 30-40 minutes in length
- * Concert - "The Beast Over Hammersmith" (recorded in the early '80s; previously unreleased) - 60 minutes

Disc Two:

- * Concert - "Live At Donington" (recorded in the '80s; previously unreleased) - 60 minutes
- * Documentary: A newly filmed history of IRON MAIDEN (part 1) - approximately 30-40 minutes in length

Extras:

- * "Top of The Pops" performance of "Women In Uniform" (1981)
- * "Top of The Pops" performance of "Sanctuary" (1981)
- * "Rock & Pop" (German TV) track (1981)
- * Documentary - Colourbox from Granada TV (1981) - 25 minutes



>Dates continue to be solidified for the upcoming Uneath, Terror, The Black Dahlia Murder, and Remembering Never tour. Here's the latest:

- 9/23 Poughkeepsie NY @ The Chance
- 9/24 Worcester MA @ Palladium
- 9/25 South Amboy NJ @ Club Krome
- 9/26 Philadelphia PA @ Theater for Living Arts
- 9/28 New York NY @ The Knitting Factory
- 9/29 Buffalo NY @ Showplace Theatre
- 9/30 Cleveland OH @ Peabody's Down Under
- 10/1 Pittsburgh PA @ The World
- 10/2 Detroit MI @ St. Andrews Hall
- 10/3 Chicago IL @ The Bottom Lounge
- 10/5 Kansas City MO @ El Torreon
- 10/6 Denver CO @ Rock Island
- 10/8 Seattle WA @ Graceland
- 10/9 Portland OR @ Meow Meow
- 10/12 San Luis Obispo CA @ SLO Brewing Company
- 10/13 Bakersfield CA @ Jerry's Pizza
- 10/15 San Diego CA @ Epicenter
- 10/16 Phoenix AZ @ Mason Jar

>Brett Alexander Savory and M. W. Anderson's West Memphis Three anthology, "Last Pentacle of the Sun: Writings in Support of the West Memphis Three", featuring a contribution by METALLICA frontman James Hetfield, will have its official launch concert/party on October 14 at Club Rockit in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. A dealer will be set up at a kiosk with copies of the book for sale, and the entertainment will be Savory's southern doom rock band THE DIABLO RED as well as another act yet to be determined. Doors open at 7 p.m.; cover will be \$5.

>Due in early October through Arsenal Pulp Press, "Last Pentacle of the Sun: Writings in Support of the West Memphis Three" will raise money for the defense of the "West Memphis Three", young men tried and found guilty of a murder through "a disturbing pattern of public hysterics, official misconduct, and completely illogical judicial conclusions," according to Savory. "These young men were convenient suspects not because of evidence, but because they wore black, listened to heavy metal music, and liked horror fiction. It is a very disturbing situation." Check out the website, www.wm3.org, created to raise awareness of the case. The book will be made up of 13 works of fiction and 8 works of non-fiction, plus one set of lyrics, some black-and-white photos, and several black-and-white illustrations, which, when all is said and done, comes out to about 70,000 words. Contributors are (in alphabetical order):

- Peg Aloi
- Clive Barker
- Joe Berlinger & Bruce Sinofsky
- Gary A. Braunbeck
- Poppy Z. Brite & Caitlin R. Kiernan
- Stephen Dedman
- Adam Greene & David Niall Wilson
- James Hetfield
- Brian Hodge
- Gerard Houarner
- Philip Jenkins
- Mara Leveritt
- Bentley Little
- Simon Logan
- Michael Marano
- Elizabeth Massie
- James Morrow
- Scott Nicholson
- Mike Oliveri
- Grove Pashley
- John Pelan

Adam Roberts
Burk Sauls
Peter Straub
Paul G. Tremblay

In addition to the book, two films about the case coming out later this year - a feature film, "West Memphis Three" and "Devil's Knot" based on Mara Leveritt's book.

>Las Vegas, NV outfit Folsom recently signed with Spook City Records. The group has previously released a self-titled full-length with Westcoast Worldwide Records



>In other news, Cryptopsy have announced a 20-date Canadian tour beginning in early September. Confirmed dates are as follows:

Oct. 08 - Quebec (QC) - Campus De Charlesbourg
Oct. 09 - Montreal (QC) - Le Medley
Oct. 15 - Saguenay, Quebec (QC) - TBA
Oct. 16 - Dolbeau, Quebec (QC) - Vox
Oct. 23 - Rouyn-Noranda (Qc) - Petit Theatre
Oct. 28 - Ottawa (ON) - Barrymore's Music Hall - Ottawa Deathfest
Oct. 29 - Oshawa, Ontario (ON) - Dungeon
Oct. 30 - Hamilton, Ontario (ON) - Underground
Oct. 31 - Peterborough, Ontario (ON) - Trasheteria
Nov. 05 - Rimouski (QC) - La Coudée
Nov. 06 - Trois-Rivières (QC) - Le Maquisart - Trois-Rivières Metalfest IV

>Swedish black metallers SHINING have officially called it a day. The group's final album, "IV: The Eerie Cold", will be issued this winter through Avantgarde Music. "I have achieved what very few others have with this ill child of mine and I sincerely hope that you will hate the new album," said SHINING mainman Kvarforth in a statement. "It's a legacy over eight years of complete disgust towards every single one of you fuckers out there and will for sure make you realize you can't do better, the chill along your back, this is where we will remain from now on, SHINING are no more." In addition to ceasing all SHINING-related activities, Kvarforth has also decided to end his work with one of today's most respected underground record labels, Selbstmord Services. Commented Kvarforth: "The firm has been hanging in fragile threads the past two years. I tried to do something about it but failed gigantically, most of our artists are now signed to other labels though, so expect no fucking mercy from these harmful units the coming months! I want to send my deepest gratitude to all of you who supported Selbstmord Services 'till the end, no fucking matter what. I owe you all... You know who you are." SHINING "IV: The Eerie Cold" track listing:

>Record Reviews

Ragnarok - Blackdoor Miracle Regain Records

Black metal upstarts Ragnarok infuse their battery of blast beats and brutal riffs with melodic sensibilities and old school nods, helping to push "Blackdoor Miracle" to another level. They freely experiment with time changes, studio effects and classical influences, which makes this one an especially interesting effort from the majority of releases I receive in this vein. Though they are covered in corpse paint and well versed in occult ideals, their talent never takes a backseat to theatrics. I am still in awe of tracks like "Heir Of Darkness," "Recreation Of The Angel," "Murder," "Kneel," and "Journey From Life." The sound quality is what it should be, with everything falling into place perfectly. "Blackdoor Miracle" is already one of my favorite releases of the year, and after a couple of listens, I am sure you will be equally convinced.



Summer Dying - One Last Taste Of Temptation Self Released

Michigan's rising sons Summer Dying inch closer to stardom (and a label deal) with "One Last Taste Of Temptation." Equal parts metal and hardcore, Summer Dying are dancefloor friendly but far from incapable of getting a crowd to raise the horns in unison. The material is highly reminiscent of Shadows Fall, Killswitch Engage and Chimaira but Summer Dying make their mark with various unique additions. I hear a lot of mid 90s metalcore, which is refreshing, especially when capped off with the better elements of today's scene. With lots of razor sharp licks, solid vocals and interesting time changes, Summer Dying keep adrenaline levels high. Though the production is somewhat thin, the force of their efforts seeps through. With more time in the studio and proper promotional backing, I see this band going far; hopefully they'll be given that chance soon.

Primal Fear - Devil's Ground Nuclear Blast Records

"Metal Is Forever!!!" The first words spoken on this disc may be somewhat gaudy, but true nevertheless. Primal Fear are back again with another album of power metal, that stands strong in the past, but has a firm grip on the future with strong shades of heaviness that modern peddlers of the genre seem to have lost sight of. The opening number is by far the strongest here, but tracks like "Suicide and Mania," "Visions Of Hate," "Soulchaser," and "Heart Of A Brave" should not be so quickly discounted. The recording quality is perfect, as most have come to expect from this band. The artwork is well done, and the lyrics are sing along approved. Primal Fear doesn't leave out the balladry, but the acoustic meanderings of the band aren't half bad, so it's quite tolerable. My only real complaint is with the final offering, "Devil's Ground." It's a spoken word piece that no matter how many times I've endured listening to it, still makes zero sense to me. So awful. Other than that minor flaw, Primal Fear has the chops and charm to make their corner of the metal world particularly inviting...



Acheron - Rebirth: Metamorphosing Into Godhood Black Lotus Records

Long running Satanic act Acheron return with "Rebirth: Metamorphosing Into Godhood", a heady mix of death, thrash and black metal. Vincent Crowley and Co. display their influences proudly, which is not a bad thing since they are utilized effectively. Though far from original and quite cheesy at times, Acheron are adept at crafting hymns to the Dark Lord that are a bit more catchy than competitors material. Part of that fact lies in each song rather simple nature, making them accessible and easy to remember. Personally, I find myself caught in-between the two extremes: overly technical tunes may impress with showboating riffage, but they don't stick, while primitive chords/drum patterns tend to grow dull fast. I appreciate a solid combination. Acheron is about halfway towards both ends of the spectrum as usual, with tracks like "Church Of One," "Xomaly," "The Kindred," and "Golgotha's Truth" being particular stand-outs. Certainly not the finest release on the market, but not a completely lackluster one either. If you enjoyed the previous work of Acheron, check this one out.

Xasthur - Telepathic With The Deceased

Moribund Records

Raw, minimalist and rage filled, this one man project stays true to classic black metal form, but allows his compositions to gain some added punch with the influence of other extreme music genres, namely doom and thrash. The riffs are well written, both simple and complex, and above all, intoxicating, whether they are performed through electronic means or traditional six string arrangements. Vocals are typical harsh howls and banshee wails that cuts right to the bone, with just the right amount of chilling horror. There is melody abound even in the darkest chords and spoken exorcisms and it helps to break up the monotony of "loud fast rules," a school of primitive thought far too many bands subscribe too. Unfortunately, all of these observations took sometime to come to, due to the fact that the recording is far from the best. I've heard worse, but this definitely is not going to win any awards for clarity or distinction. I know that there are plenty of black metal outfits/individuals out there who believe that production should kept to a bare minimum, which can add atmosphere and depth, but it taints full enjoyment. Overall, I feel "Telepathic With The Deceased" is a noble effort, and the best is yet to come from ringmaster Malefic and his brand of multinstrumental alchemy.



Lilitu - The Delores Lesion

The End Records

Many labels have a reputation for releasing albums that have very predictable content, as every group on their roster sounds identical and/or is in the same genre. The End Records has a diverse lineup of artists to be sure, but are well known for their interest in the avant garde, experimental and CD's that fall under the "out there" tag. Of course, groups like Crisis and Darkthrone have helped to remove the "one trick pony" stigma and the final nail in the coffin surely will be this incredible album. Heartwrenching melodic black/thrash metal with a slight hardcore bent is what Lilitu brings to the table with "The Delores Lesion." Finely crafted tunes with soaring harmonies, sandpaper vocals and lots of big riffs that you'll be humming in no time at all really had me in love with this band long before the eight tracks featured were even close to being finished. My initial impressions were that Lilitu really sounds like a mix between the best parts of new and old In Flames, and while that summation held up well overall, this group caught me off guard several times. The Anders and Co. reference is very obvious in the first couple tracks, but as the discs marches on, Lilitu prove themselves as very unique, accessible and inventive. Interweaving electronics, acoustic ballads and great guests on the mic, Lilitu dazzle with displays of fretboard gymnastics, gothic grandeur and majestic arrangements. Probably my greatest admiration stems in awe of vocalist/guitarist Derek Bonner. What a set of pipes. He goes from sorethroat screams to rapid fire black metal rasps straight to heavenly heights. Though his bandmates are surely not second rate by any stretch of the imagination. Drummer Corey Long is machine like, alternating between subtle beats and full on percussive assaults with the greatest of ease. Guitarist Jason Piona shreds like a man possessed, with unearthly solos that have every note searing with hellfire. Ever-changing and constantly evolving, "The Delores Lesion" has much to offer a wide range of musical palates and is highly recommended.

Draconian - Where Lovers Mourn

Napalm Records/SPV

To the devout followers of My Dying Bride, Novembers Doom, Anathema and Trail Of Tears; "Where The Lovers Mourn" is the fix you need. Their injections of nightshade, steeped in eternal loss and longing, will envelop and astound you from the first dose to the bittersweet end. Gritty, distorted chords compete against layered, angelic strings while low, spoken growls that lead, twisting in time with the rich, full and undeniably operatic backgrounds, which more often than not take center stage. The sorrow in each song is like a tidal wave carrying you out to sea to drown in agony but awaken with open eyes and a weary smile; Draconian makes it a wonderful feeling. Production worthy of a massive concert hall, but intimate enough for an isolated cabin on the edge of nowhere, with each musical fall into place with the perfection only a dedicated and patient maestro can attain. The presenters of this epic utilize classical instruments and current technology to make a marvelous land that is timelessly tragic, as well as being a monument to modern misery. Each contributor is master of their conduit, and the sparks that flicker like fireflies throughout "Where Lovers Mourn" demonstrate that mustering up a night sky is not so difficult; making the stars shine is what takes skill. Oh, how Draconian makes them shine; so bright they can't be ignored. ☞



01. I Och Med Insikt Skall Du Förgå
02. Vemodets Arkitektur
03. Någonting Är Jävligt Fel
04. Eradication Of The Condition
05. The Eerie Cold (Samvetskvälens Ridå Öppnades)
06. Claws Of Perdition



>Finnish metal band Nightwish have officially signed with Roadrunner Records for the release of their "Once" album in the US, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand later this year. Meanwhile, look for the group on tour in the US and Canada later this month.



>Behemoth and Krisiun will be co-headlining a European tour this fall, with support from Incantation and Ragnarok. Here's the schedule:

- 10/21 Tilberg, Netherlands @ 013
- 10/22 Groningen, Netherlands @ Vera
- 10/23 Vosselaar, Belgium @ BIEBOB
- 10/24 Paris, France @ Locomotive
- 10/25 London, UK @ Underworld
- 10/26 Dublin, Ireland @ Whelans
- 10/27 UK @ TBA
- 10/28 France @ TBA
- 10/29 Trier, Germany @ Exil
- 10/30 France @ TBA
- 10/31 Germany @ TBA
- 11/1 Essen, Denmark @ Zeche Carl
- 11/2 Germany @ TBA
- 11/3 Goteborg, Sweden @ Musikh Hus
- 11/4 Oslo, Norway @ John Dee
- 11/5 Bergen, Norway @ Garage
- 11/6 Sandnes, Norway @ Tribute
- 11/7 Denmark @ TBA
- 11/8 Germany @ TBA
- 11/9 Germany @ TBA
- 11/10 Switzerland @ TBA
- 11/11 France @ TBA
- 11/12 Barcelona, Spain @ Mephisto
- 11/13 Madrid, Spain @ Ritmo & Compass
- 11/14 Irun, Spain @ Tunk
- 11/15 France @ TBA ☞

An Interview With Dead To Fall



Jonathan Hunt of Dead To Fall and I discuss the finer points of practice spaces, Japanese wood carvings, line up changes, the Midwest and lyrical interpretation.

So how did DTF get started, when, and what motivated you to be a part of this band?

The original incarnation of Dead To Fall started in high school around '99. I wasn't the original singer. They had a different guy for about two weeks and then I joined. We had all been in heavy bands before, and we were all friends, and we all wanted to play heavy music so that's how things got started. People joined up and left, but we kept going. We got more serious and eventually started recording some demos.

Victory was interested and we signed with them. Our motivation then and now was to get out, play shows, have fun. It's something we truly and greatly enjoy.

Where was your first practice space? How about now?

Our first practice space was at this place called The Edge, which you could rent out. Everybody chipped in like \$6 a piece for a night of practice. It was actually a really nice place.

Damn dude. I was hoping for a sweet "we started out in my mom's garage story." (laughs)

(laughs) Actually we moved to our drummers grandmothers spare bedroom right after that. It was pretty awesome, we just took it over and put padding up and made it our place. She kicked us out though. Lately we've been practicing in the basement of a venue in Chicago.

You guys are about to put out your

second full length for Victory, "Villainy and Virtue." How do you feel it compares to your previous output?

It's matured. I think that's a really good word to describe the new record. Better songwriting, heavier hitting, faster. The production is a lot better than the last record. Everything has been stepped up to the next level, every single component. I think it's the best stuff we've done. I'm way stoked to get it out there.

I've read some reviews of the new disc and critics have said it's a lot more metal (which it definitely is), which astounds me since I hear a ton of breakdowns and tons of two step parts. Any comment?

We're all hardcore kids. Our bass player Justin is probably the most metal out of all of us. We all grew up going to hardcore shows, that influence will always be there. It's hard for me to say which record has more breakdowns or is more core since that's totally open to opinion. This one has lots of breakdowns but is also very metal.

Why did you choose the title "Villainy and Virtue?"

The actual title comes from one of the tracks, so it mostly comes from there. Though when I was writing lyrics for the record, I realized they all go on either side, towards the villainous side of humanity or the virtuous side. Everyone definitely has both sides. It's just about the struggle to maintain the balance, and not letting one win over the other, because we need both; it's what makes us who we are.

The cover art is awesome, really unique. Are you into mythology/folklore?

Paul Romano did the artwork. We had a

meeting with him and we just talked about what we wanted to do. We definitely wanted to stay away from the typical stuff, like blood splatter and skulls and whatnot. We wanted something that represented the concepts of the record. We wanted like a mural for the booklet, five panels of artwork going all the way across, ending in the cover. We sat in Paul's apt, just going through various books, looking for ideas while we were recording the record in Philadelphia. Everyone in the band was into the books on Japanese woodcarvings, and the way that looked. Paul explained to us that a lot of woodcarvings display the ideas of "villainy and virtue." We also talked about how the way comic books work, that there is always that battle between good and evil and we wanted to integrate that style in as well. Eventually he came up with something that was like both.

I know you've had quite a few member changes, including a pretty massive one awhile back. Was that difficult to overcome?

It was very difficult. For more than four years, this band has consumed up almost all of my energy and it's something I really love doing. It came down to the point where it was just me and the bass player left of the original line up after a couple tours and all at once, things started falling apart. We knew one of the guys was going to leave, and then all of the sudden, two others decide to go at the same time. Me and the bassist just sat down and asked ourselves, "Who can we get to replace them?" and "Should we keep doing this?" We did one last show with the "Everything I Touch Falls To Pieces" line up and that was cool. Justin and I talked to Matt Matera from 7angels7plagues, which is a band we used to tour with a lot. He said he was down to do it. Anton agreed to come back and help us write the new record. All we need then was a drummer. We knew this band from Cleveland called Above This Fire and they lived next door to a kid who played drums. They said he was really good so when I was down in Cleveland for a show, we started talking and he played drums for me. I was into it. A couple of weeks later, I drove the van to Cleveland. We packed up his drums, he hadn't even met the other guys in the band, and we took off for Chicago. After one practice, he was in the band. After Anton helped us write the record, he left to take care of his grandmother and keep working, and we asked a friend of ours to join, Logan Kelly. He used to play in Nehemiah and Coma Eternal and he's been great.

Speaking of Matt Matera, was he someone you sought out actively when you were retooling the DTF lineup?

From the beginning, I knew that our old guitarist Brian was going to be leaving. He had plans to go to school and everyone in the band understood that a year and a half after the release of "Everything..." he was off to college. From that point, I had been thinking about Matt, and had talked to him about joining up. He was down to it. That was pretty much the pivotal moment for us wanting to continue this band. Having half the band complete made it easier to go about finding the other two missing pieces.

What are your thoughts/feelings on the Midwest metal/hardcore scene right now?

I think it's the best it's ever been. Hardcore and metal is getting a lot bigger and there are a lot of great bands out there. The only problem in the Midwest is that a lot of venues are getting shut down and/or not doing hardcore

shows. The scene is getting really strong. The Midwest, for the first time, is not trying to imitate either coast, and is doing its own thing instead.

I heard that @ Hellfest (as well as on your recent tour) you got everyone to sing "Everything I Eat Tastes Like Pizza" instead of "Everything I Touch Falls To Pieces." True?

An Interview With Carcass

There are few bands that can lay claim to the amount of influence they've had on the metal scene as Carcass did and continue to. The godfathers of "gore metal" and early proponents of "melodic death," Carcass are kings among metal-heads. I recently had the extremely great honor to interview Mr. Ken Owen, who talked about the bands history, animal rights, his medical condition, and what it was like having a fairly shorn skull in a world ruled by longhairs.

First and foremost, I'd really like to thank you for taking the time to do this interview. I truly appreciate it. With that said, if you wouldn't mind formally introducing yourself and offering up a brief history of how Carcass came to be?

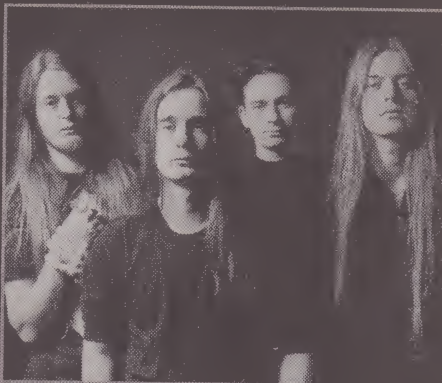
My name is Ken Owen, I was the drummer for Carcass. We came into existence with Bill Steer on guitar, Jeff Walker on bass and vocals and myself on drums and we had a number of second guitarists throughout our career. Bill and I met at the age of 6 years old during our spell in junior school, he lived in the same town as I did (Heswall, Wirral, Merseyside). Jeff originally came from St. Helens (Merseyside) and we met him at a gig where he was playing with his band (Electro Hippies). Because of the type of music we were all into we got on extremely well, and soon we started to jam out at Bill's place (which pleased my folks a lot). As far as I can remember, Bill thought of the name of Carcass, and we all thought it sounded right for the type of music that we were playing. Democracy was always a strong point for the band, we always discussed everything, and nothing was done unless it had been agreed upon.

What were some of your early memories of the band, and on a similar note, what initially attracted you to metal/extreme music?

I had always been into heavy music, and as soon as Bill introduced me to the 'tape trading scene' my tastes got more extreme. We all used to hang out at a record shop called PROBE who was the foremost place to purchase metal/extreme music. Through them we played our first gig at PLANET X which was in the centre of Liverpool, a club specialising in extreme music. I remember it was very small and dark inside but the gig went down very well, well enough for PLANET X to ask us back !! We played there a number of times and through word of mouth we played more gigs in places like Birmingham, Norwich, Nottingham and Manchester. Eventually we were signed up by Earache Records and we made our first record (Reek Of Putrefication). Just after this we were playing at Norwich when John Peel heard us and he then started to feature our record on his Radio 1 show for some time.

Who were some of your influences throughout the career of Carcass, both as a drummer and with the band in general?

I read that on Lambgoat too and after watching the video of that set, I noticed that mic was unplugged at the end of that song. Now, I have said that before ("everything I eat tastes like pizza") but I don't know how anyone knew what I was saying it. I only did it at two shows, one in Pittsburgh and one in West Virginia. I doubt it came from the West Virginia show other since there were only like 10 kids at that show. It comes from an ongoing



In general, we were heavily influenced by Death, Repulsion, Possessed, Heresy, Napalm Death and the like.

Many tend to view Carcass in categories of your first few recordings which was more grind oriented and gore based and the later work that focused on the melodic death sound. Do you see it that way, or is it a seamless musical garment for you?

Although it was meant to be a 'seamless garment' as you put it, we did try to change the sound for each album without trying to detract from our usual sound. We were very wary of making the same album twice and therefore we tried to make subtle changes to each album. It was important to keep the same overall sound, which we were famous for, on every album, but we tried to make slight variations to keep the sound as fresh as possible. To ensure continuity we always used the same producer (Colin Richardson), who was like the fifth member of the band.

One aspect of Carcass I greatly admired was the majority of the band being vegan/vegetarian. Do you still believe in/follow that lifestyle and what drew you to abstaining from animal flesh and products in the first place? Did you ever get any flack from other bands/individuals in the metal community for your dietary stance?

Certainly I am still a vegetarian, and as far as I know the rest of the band are as well. Through Bill and Jeff, who were already of that persuasion, I reassessed my eating habits and decided to join them. As far as I can remember we received no flack whatsoever from others in the music community, in fact, most of the bands we used to associate with also had at least one member who was vegan/vegetarian. In the early days it was very difficult to keep to the vegetarian lifestyle when we were on the road although we were all determined to keep to our diets.

Carcass is truly legendary within the scene, admired by a great and many individuals. How does it make you feel to know that peers and fans look up to you and have elevated your work to other worldly status?

It makes me very proud that people throughout the world are still interested in our music, even though

ing joke with my roommates, who are in this band called Over and Over. They were on tour with us at one time, including the shows I just mentioned and that's when we started doing it. I didn't do it at Hellfest so I don't know where that came from. Rumors just spread like wildfire I guess. I mean I might have said it, but I don't remember it, and after watching the tape, it sure doesn't look it. ☞

we disbanded some years ago. It makes me especially proud to think that our music may have inspired other people to make their own music and followed in our footsteps.

I don't want to pry, and you need not answer any of my questions, but would you be willing to discuss the matter of your past illness, and more importantly, how you are presently doing.

In February 1999 I bent over to stroke my cat and passed out. My wife telephoned a friend who told her to call an ambulance. When I awoke in hospital I was told that I had a brain hemorrhage, and after brain scans they found the original cause of the hemorrhage, which meant that I had to undergo brain surgery. I was told that if the cause had not been found that eventually I would have had another brain hemorrhage and it would have killed me. I had the surgery after which I was very ill, suffering from a non-bacterial form of meningitis. The result of my illness has left me with having to start my life again, having to relearn all the necessary life skills for an independent life again. I still suffer from memory problems although I have strategies to deal with this.

Who/what has helped you most on the road to recovery?

My folks have been a tower of strength to me during my illness, as have the rest of my family and friends. Without them I would not be in the position I am today, which is well on the road to recovery. I have received numerous messages from fans from all over the world, which I have really appreciated. Because of my illness I have lived with my parents for a few years, which has meant that I have had to temporarily leave the extreme scene, although I keep in touch through magazines. Bill and Jeff have also been immensely helpful to me, visiting me in hospital and contacting me as often as possible.

I know you had a significant hand in the selection of tracks for "Choice Cuts," your "greatest hits" collection, so to speak. What criteria was utilized for determining what was included, and do you any memories you'd like to share about the Peel Session recordings?

Basically these are the tracks that I like the best and that I had the most pleasure playing I also feel that my drumming sounds at its best on a couple of these tracks. The Peel sessions were tough to record. The producer was notoriously difficult but the results turned out better than we had hoped for.

Pardon me if this comes out as a strange comment, but I think you were one of the few death metal band members I remember seeing when I originally got into metal about 11-12 years ago that didn't have long hair. I thought it was pretty non-conformist of you, whether it was intentional defiance or not. Any thoughts on that?

The short hair came about as a result of going to Greece in a heatwave. I had long hair up to that point but it became so unpleasant in the heat that I cut it off. The girls thought the short hair image was cool - so it stayed. ☞

An Interview With Unearth

What year did Unearth begin, what was the line up then and now, and where are you from originally?

We formed in 1998 on the North Shore of Massachusetts. Buz, Ken and myself are original members, but we had Mike Rudberg on drums and Chris Rybicki on bass back in the day.

You guys started on Endless Fight Records and ended up on Metal Blade in five years. When you began, is there where expected to come out at?

We never had a blue-print laid out on where we wanted to be in five years. We concentrate on making music we love and having fun playing shows. The fact that we have come a long way from the early days means a ton to us. The longer we can play real music for people, the better.

How was your first Ozzfest, and did you have a good time on your offdate shows?

Ozzfest was everything we thought it would be, amazing shows, good times with the other bands, lots of drinking, many nights of heavy metal BBQ, tons of meeting new people (both fans and music peeps), and just a great summer altogether. The off-date shows were awesome because it gave us a chance to get back to the club atmosphere we are used to. Playing Ozzfest was a great experience and sharing the bill with legends such as Black Sabbath, Slayer and Judas Priest was an incredible honor, but we honestly can not wait to go out and bust some ass in the small clubs again.

Unearth recently was included on the MTV2 Headbangers Ball tour this past spring with Drowning Pool, DamagePlan and Hatebreed. Did you guys feel like you had something to prove, especially since I'm sure most of the crowd wasn't exactly familiar with you guys?

That tour was a different world for us. We had done stuff with Hatebreed before, but never Damageplan or Drowning Pool. It was a learning experience for us as far as the different audience we played in front of. Besides that, the guys in the other bands were just as cool as almost every band we tour with, simply normal, down to earth dudes.

This band was one of the first I heard to really combine heavy hardcore and true metal and actually make it work. Sure, groups have done it in the past but not really as well or really paying tribute to both genres/influences properly. Is that something you wanted to do since day one?

Besides stand outs such as Pantera and Testament metal started sounding the same in the early 90's with the intro, verse, chorus, verse, chorus, SOLO, chorus formula. It all started running together for me and I assume most of the metal listeners. I first heard Earth Crisis's "Firestorm" midway through high school and I acted like Marvin Berry in Back to the Future. "This was the sound I had been looking for". There was heavy guitars, balls out vocals and song structure that varied from song to song.



The best part was the lack of the "guitar solo". Solo's are good when used sparingly, but to have one in every song made metal boring as all hell. Anyway, my point is that my band mates and I are all around the same age and we saw the best of early metal and the worst of it as well. We also saw the birth of metal into hardcore in the underground. All of this growing up worked its way into our influences. I really think that is a big reason why there are so many kick ass bands out today, Killswitch Engage, Lamb of God, God Forbid, Bleeding Through, etc.... All of these bands grew up with the best of both worlds, Slayer, Iron Maiden, Crowbar, Testament, Pantera, etc... and Earth Crisis, Sick of it All, Snapcase, Overcast, Cave In, etc....

You elected to have Adam D. produce your latest, even though certain members have helmed the boards themselves for other bands. Any particular reason you decided not to do the job yourselves?

We chose Adam for a handful of reasons. He has worked with us before, he has a ton of experience and a great track record of engineering and producing, we trust his opinion, he is a great musician that can help with transitions and structure and he is another ear besides just ours. Unearth is a democracy. If we have just one of the five guys making the producing calls and turning buttons and making the songs only his vision, then that would cause resentment and internal fights. Having one guy you can trust (Adam D.) makes everything roll a lot easier for the five guys actually in the band.

"The Oncoming Storm" has been getting nothing but an excellent reaction from fans and critics. Some, (including myself) already are calling it a classic. What do you feel makes "The Oncoming Storm" such an amazing record and did you expect it would become this popular?

You can never expect people to like your music. We wrote the best record we could for ourselves

and the fact that it is getting such great attention and praise makes us happy as hell. I am not sure about calling it a classic, but I feel it is a strong record from start to finish and that is all I ask for from bands that I dig. Now it is our job to hit the road and play these songs for people who like the record.

Why did you re-record "Endless" and include it on your latest?

"Endless" was the title track of an EP we released on Eulogy Recordings in 2002. That EP has sold maybe 12,000 copies. The Oncoming Storm has already sold around 50,000 copies in 10 weeks. We like the song, people prefer full length cd's over EP's, so we wanted more people to hear the tune.

How are things going with your new drummer?

He is one of the best drummers in metal and hardcore today and he compliments his playing ability with great showmanship. We could not have asked for a better piece to our band. We are still getting accustomed to each others personalities a bit, but that is normal. We basically live together 24-7 for seven to nine months a year in close quarters. Welcoming a new personality into a tribe that has been together for years is a slight challenge, but everything is right on course. I feel the line up we have now will be one we stick with for a long long time.

Unearth is about to head out with Black Dahlia Murder, Terror and Remembering Never. What made you want to do this tour, as opposed to any other package offer you may or may not have received, and where will you be heading and with whom after this tour?

We have been a band for six years and have never done a Full US headlining tour. Last summer we toured with In Flames, then we did the Headbangers Ball tour with Lamb of God, Shadows Fall and Killswitch Engage, followed by the second Headbangers tour with Hatebreed and Damageplan, only to then go out all summer

on Ozzfest. If we didn't headline this fall then we would have felt like we were spinning our wheels as a support band. We also wanted to put a package together of bands that we feel kick some ass.

I personally have never looked forward to a tour as much as I am for our headlining run. We get an hour every night to play music to our fans. Winning over new fans as a support band is a great and rewarding thing, but there is an energy and feeling you get that is like no other when you play for people who are already fans of your music.

I know you've got a label, Ironclad Recordings. Any new releases kids should know about, and where can they be purchased?

I started Ironclad to get some kick ass underground bands some recognition. I see too many "indie" labels sign bands because they have a trendy sound. I sign and support only what I like. I just signed a distribution deal with Metal Blade for Ironclad and I will be re-releasing both the If Hope Dies "The Ground is Rushing up to Meet Us" and Since the Flood "Valor and Vengeance" cd's in the near future. New signings will be announced soon and cd's are available on www.ironcladrecordings.com.

You recently shared your thoughts with AMP readers about the current presidential election. Anything else you'd like to add to that original statement? Did you watch the Democratic and Republican National Conventions? Any thoughts/observations?

Dick Cheney recently warned Americans that the "wrong decision" on Election Day could cause another terrorist attack. I am not exactly sure how voting for John Kerry as the next President of the United States would cause another attack on our soil. Wasn't it the ties the Bush administration has with Saudi Arabia and the Bin Laden family that helped aide in the reasoning of the terrorists? As President, John Kerry would hopefully eliminate the financial dependency the U.S. has in the Middle East and our need for oil. Hopefully then we can move on to more economical and environmental fuel. Perhaps Cheney was urging people not to vote for Bush. Wouldn't that be something? More than likely, though, he was using the all too common scare tactic that the current administration has shown us they will bring out when they have an agenda.

What do you think is the most important issue facing the world today?

We need to eliminate terrorism, but in a less barbaric way. We can not take over country after country because we feel they might be harboring terrorists or weapons of mass destruction. Invading Iraq is only making more terrorists and putting more U.S. lives in jeopardy. We have already lost over 1000 soldiers in a war that found no weapons of mass destruction.

Funniest tour story you can think of?

An alligator chased our sound guy in Florida this past May. It was fucking hilarious. The gator eventually stopped running and went back into his swamp, but for a good five seconds we were having some redneck fun watching Big D. run for his life.

Anything you'd like to add?

Come see us on the road and/or go out and get our new record. I promise you will like at least one of the options. ☞

An Interview With Black Dahlia Murder



Guitarist Brian Eschbach and I talk shows, the follow up to "Unhallowed," tribute CDs and if life would be better as a vampire or a werewolf.

For those that may not know too much about you guys, could you give a short band history?

We formed in January of 2001 and began playing shows around the Detroit metropolitan area. In 2002 we put out an EP on Lovelost Records entitled a Cold-Blooded Epitaph. In Early 2003 we signed to Metal Blade Records. Our first release with them, Unhallowed, was released in June of 2003, and we've been touring on and off, mostly on, ever since.

So what has Black Dahlia Murder been up to as of late?

We just recently came home from touring with Goatwhore, Cattle Decapitation, and Watch Them Die. So far we've just been spending the downtime writing new material before we go out again in late September with Unearth, Terror, and Remembering Never.

When can fans expect a follow up to "Unhallowed?"

We're really hoping to release the follow up in early summer of 2005.

Is it going to be a continuation of what you're presently doing or are you going to integrate some new ideas/sounds?

We've pretty much been doing quite a bit of experimenting. There are some elements on Unhallowed that, in retrospect, we wished we had explored more extensively and we're really trying to flesh out more of those elements in our more current material.

Will you be returning to Cloud City or do you have another studio and producer you've got an eye on?

Unfortunately we just found out that the studio we had wanted to go to is totally booked solid for the next year and a half, so right now we're looking into our other options.

Any further developments about BDM being on those tributes for Napalm Death and Cannibal Corpse?

The Napalm Death tribute was only sorta spoken about on one occasion with these rather pushy

people, so the idea hasn't really been thought of again until you just brought it up. As far as the Cannibal Corpse tribute is concerned, I never knew we had the prospect offered to us.

Are there going to be any more videos made for Unhallowed tracks?

I really have no idea if there would even be time in our schedule to shoot another video before the release of the next album. However, if given the option, I would have loved to have made a video for Apex.

Which do you personally prefer: making records or touring?

I love to travel and play live, so I guess I'd have to say I prefer touring. Recording's the kinda shit that makes me wanna throw myself down a flight of stairs.

Why did you elect to re-release the EP?

Even before Lovelost Records stopped pressing it, they weren't exactly getting it to everyone who wanted it, so we decided to go with Black Market Activities and re-release it with a couple of extra's and a new layout. It's nothing revolutionary by any means, but there are still people that approach us looking for it. It's just better to give peeps what they want, of course with exception to our demo which blows ass.

What bands/records are you really into right now?

I've been listening to Necrophagist's Epitaph twice a day since I got home. It's really the only current album I've been rocking extensively.

Most interesting and/or funniest thing you've seen on tour outside of the U.S.?

Our international touring has been pretty limited so far, so don't be disappointed when I tell you that the only thing that comes to mind are the club-folk in Japan. All of the dudes bleach their hair and style it up like Ziggy Stardust. I apologize, I told you it wasn't that good.

Ok, I was watching the movie "Underworld" yesterday, and this question directly stems from that. If you had the choice, which would you rather be: a vampire or a werewolf? Why?

Well, in the end I think it was a werewolf that ended up banging Kate Beckinsale... ☞

An Interview With Remembering Never



Vocalist Mean Peter touches on their shift in sound, "selfishness" in music, religion, XDiary Of A CorpseX, and why they went with the title "Women And Children Die First" for their latest record.

When Remembering Never originally started, you were the guitarist. How did you end up in the vocalist position?
Our singer had just quit to become a big-time rapper, when our record was almost finished. We didn't really trust anyone else with the vocal position. I didn't really want to do it, but we had no other choice.

Remembering Never was also a far more melodic band in the beginning, and while you still got harmonies, the mosh factor has definitely been upped. Did you strive to be a more aggressive band this time around?

No, we just wrote music that would be fun to play live. This is a far more "angry" record than the last, so it was a natural progression.

In the liner notes to "Women And Children Die First," you express your dissatisfaction with your last record "She Looks So Good In Red." What exactly don't you like about it and how were those elements changed with "Women?"
SHE LOOKS was extremely rushed, we had 4 lineup changes 2 months before we recorded it. It was very immature. With WOMEN AND CHILDREN we had a bit more time to fuck around. We tried to keep all the things we liked about SHE LOOKS and eliminate all the parts we didn't. That's how we write I suppose. the next record will be quite interesting.

Along the same lines, I've heard you refer to "Looks" and your first album, "Suffocates My Words To You" as "selfish" records. Why do you call them that? Do you consider your newer work to be unselfish?

Because they were about personal experiences of ours. There is nothing to gain from it but poetry, and bad poetry I might add. This record offers a lot of things to think about and possibly change the way people see things.

While you've definitely been known for your very straight edge lyrics, animal rights is nothing I've heard expressed/discussed in any Mean Pete project. What made you become involved in the animal liberation movement and are you vegetarian or vegan?

I've been into it for a while, about four or five years; I just never talked about in song until the last record. It's a very important major issue and most people don't realize it. It affects so many more things than just animals. I eat vegan but I don't label myself, because it's a big fucking label. I encourage and support it to no end.

The opening track of "Women and Children Die First" speaks out against religion. Do you just detest organized forms of religion or all matters of faith? Why?

They have good basic morals, but the overall idea is unreasonable. It would be nice if people that followed religion went through with the lesson plan. I went to church with my mother for years, and I was into it for only because they taught me to be. I never questioned it until I was about 18 or 19. If you question it and think

about it you start to piece together the motives behind what "they" say and why "they" say them. It makes total sense to why it's nothing to take whole heartedly.

In the liner notes of "Women" there is an essay you penned that states "hardcore is dying rapidly." What makes you think/feel that is true?

I've come to the conclusion that it's not dead, because there are bands keeping in on life support, but there are too many bands not saying a fucking thing. They are on a stage for 30 minutes and all I get out of the show is someone screaming at me to mosh. There is more to this than moshing and make-up. Kids like to play and dress the part, but most of the time newer kids have no clue why they are there.

What are your thoughts on the upcoming presidential election and its candidates?

Lesser of two evils is Kerry, no matter what. I'm surprised Bush didn't get assassinated.

If there is one thing you could change in the world, what would it be?

The elimination of all corruption of everything, business, religion, politics, etc. It would be nice to live a life without a blindfold.

What happened with Until The End?

They wanted to do shows when I wasn't home so they fired me.

You have a new band, XDiary Of A CorpseX. Is it going to be in the same vein of Remembering Never and Until The End or are you trying something new lyrically and musically?

The first few songs I originally wrote for until the end and we didn't use them and I thought they had potential and deserved to be out there. I played guitar for this project, but as soon as I got word about not being in UTE anymore I switched with Aldo (bass player/RN). Obviously it's along the lines of UTE but with a different element mixed in. It's a lot of fun and we have a split CD coming out with CASEY JONES on MARTYR RECORDS before the year is over.

Why did you choose "Women And Children Die First" as the record title?

It was originally a working title, because it was rumored to be the original title for Slayer's "South of Heaven". We figured the shock value of the name would be fun, but it wasn't enough. Once we discovered it could be a direct response to a war tactic, it made so much sense.

You guys are about to head out with Terror, Black Dahlia Murder and Unearth, after just leaving the Strhress tour with Shadows Fall, As I Lay Dying and Himsa. Some pretty big line ups there. Do you hope to enlighten the audience to the issues talked about "Women and Children Die First?"

That's the plan at every show. We're there for more than just the mosh. A lot of kids like to pass me by at a show, not ask questions, and then talk shit about me on the internet. It's great.

Anything you'd like to add?

The best band ever, MY SURRENDER, from Memphis, TN, is looking for a singer. Go to www.mysurrender.net for music and all the info. Aside from that, thank you. ☛

An Interview With Terror

Doug Weber from Terror and I sat down to talk about touring, *First Blood*, *Posi Numbers*, the new record on Trustkill and the alleged dangers of wearing Terror shirts to the airport.

When/where did Terror begin and how did you end up joining the band?

The band started in April 2002. Everyone was pretty much living in LA at the time. Scott moved from Buffalo, NY to start the band with Nick and Todd. They had a few other people in the band, but they never really had a set second guitar player. At Hellfest 2002, Scott asked me if I wanted to move to LA and join the band. Of course, after almost 2 1/2 years, I still haven't moved down there. (laughs)

Was it at all shocking for you for you to be asked to join or did you already have an idea that it was going to happen?

Totally came out of blue, I had no idea it was going to happen at all. I knew Scott on kind of a "hey, what's up" basis. We talked a bit when we would see each other, but not much more than that. So yea, it was a definite shock.

Were you a fan of Buried Alive and Carry On and how did it/does it feel to be in a band with members from each of those well-known groups?

I was a huge Buried Alive fan. I didn't really get too into Carry On until after they broke up. I was really hyped to be in a band with those dudes, because they are all awesome songwriters.

Bassist Carl Schwartz and yourself are both ex members of Sworn Vengeance. Was he someone you recommended to the rest of the guys when the low end slot was left vacant by the departure of Rich Thurston?

Definitely. As soon as we knew Rich wasn't going to be in the band anymore, I basically told everyone else that we need to get Carl, that he was going to be way better than anyone we might find.

When did you start playing guitar and who inspired you to pick up the six string? Do you play any other instruments?

I don't really any other instruments. I play bass, but if you can play guitar, you can play bass. I started playing guitar in 7th grade, when I was really into bands like Slayer and Pantera. I saw how good they were, and basically said to myself, "I need to learn to shred like these guys." (laughs)

What is happening with *First Blood*? You guys need to play more. Like everyday. Seriously.

(laughs) We just recorded two songs last week-end for the split with Blacklisted on Deathwish. That should be coming out in a couple months. Basically though, Terror is so busy, it's kind of impossible to do anything with *First Blood*. Maybe once we have some more downtime, we'll do some shows but for right now, Terror is the focus.

I've heard some say that Terror is a very negative band but I really don't hear that



in the lyrics. They've always been positive and uplifting to me. How do you view the lyrical content and overall message of Terror?

I think Terror is a very positive band. I think we get our aggression through the music, all that negative energy.

What do you think separates Terror from the hundreds of other heavy hardcore bands out there?

Honestly, I don't know. I don't think we are better than any other band. I do feel though that we have never stopped since day one, we've always just pushed our music out there full force and we made people like it. (laughs)

You guys are a non-stop touring machine. I am sure it takes its toll. What do you do on the road to stay sane and who/what do you miss most when you are away from home?

I definitely miss my bed a lot. To stay sane, I sleep a lot. I have one of those Sidekick things, so I just surf the Internet a lot and talk to friends online. We are pretty boring on tour now, because we do it so much. We basically just play shows, go back to the hotel, take a shower, sleep and then get up and do it all over again the next day.

Where are you off to next?

We are about to start a US tour with Black Dahlia Murder, Remembering Never and Uneath on September 26th. We go to Japan after that.

Over the past couple years, Terror has shared the stage with many famous hardcore and metal acts. Which band have you been most honored to play on the same bill with?

Definitely Madball, Agnostic Front and Sick Of It All. I mean these are bands I grew up worshipping and having them ask my band to go on tour just blows me away.

The next question is definitely not feed the rumor mill but I would like to know

what happened @ Posi Numbers Fest this year. The basic story I've heard is that Terror had foreknowledge that FSU members were going to beat up random individuals in the crowd so impact would be added to the video you were shooting. Any truth to these accusations and any rebuttal you'd like to offer to clear the air?

This is a total bullshit rumor. We had no idea that when we played kids were going to get destroyed. We have no problem with hard dancing but we didn't know the whole crowd was going to get beat up or anything. There are all these rumors that we told people to go out and hurt kids while we were playing and that's just bullshit. There were so many kids there, so many people standing on the stage, we couldn't even see what was going on half the time. The people that said that we didn't stop playing (once the violence erupted) are lying. We did stop playing and told kids to stop fighting. Though if people are going to fight, they are going to fight. There is not much you can do to stop them. We had an obligation to play for those that came to see us and that's what we did. Don't believe what you read on the message boards.

Has it affected your response at shows at all?

Not really. I think it was just a few people on message boards starting shit. It really hasn't affected our response at shows.

Since we are on the topic of gossip, what exactly happened @ The Whisky show in L.A. when you were on tour with Born From Pain, Shattered Realm and The Promise? Why did you get hauled in?

If you've ever been to the Whisky knows that the bouncers are assholes, and they book all these hardcore shows but they are happy to take your money, but they don't accept the fact that hardcore shows can get pretty crazy. The whole night when we played there was just filled with tension between the bouncers and the kids. Every time a kid would dance, the bouncers would throw them

out When we played, we were like "fuck this" and decided to really get the crowd going. There was like a 1000 of us and 10 of them. Eventually things just exploded and a huge riot broke out. Tons of cops came. I went outside to load my equipment and got arrested for inciting a riot. (laughs)

So just because you're a big snuggly cuddlebear they hauled you in?
Pretty much. (laughs)

What are your thoughts on the scene right now? What are things that really piss you off and/or what makes you really thankful to be a part of it all?

Right now, hardcore and metal are getting really big and that's awesome, especially for the bands. It's amazing that we can tour all year and make a living off what we love doing. I understand where some kids are coming from though, like going to a Hatebreed show and there are a million douchebags there. Kids are just trying to dance and everyone is trying to fight them. So I understand both sides. Hardcore is the same as it's always been though. There is always going to be great people in the scene and there will always be retards.

You just dropped your second full length, "One With The Underdogs." How was the recording process for this disc and what is your favorite song on it?

We recorded it in February at a place called Sound City in Van Nuys. We did all the drums, bass and guitar there and then all the vocals were recorded at the studio our drummer Nick owns. We went to a place in Orange County called For The Record and did the mix there. We weren't too happy with the way it came out so we went to another place up in the Valley and remixed it and it came out really well. My favorite track is "Overcome." We're going to be doing a video for that song sometime this month.

There's a hidden track on "One With The Underdogs." What is it called and why did you make it a secret song?

The song is called "Let The Past Be The Past." We originally weren't going to put it on the record at all, we didn't think it fit very well. The song was kind of long and sort of boring to us, but in the end we said "fuck it" and put it on there as a secret track. A lot of people seem to really like it though and I get a lot of emails from people saying how much they love it and how they thought it should have been on the record.

How are things with Trustkill?

Trustkill has been awesome. They got us into every record store, put huge ads in magazines for the record, and are always pushing us and that means a lot.

Final bit of message board drama. Is Todd Jones in the band as a writer anymore? I know he no longer tours with Terror, but is he still on board in the songwriting dept?

He helped write the last record, but as of right now, he is not in the band.

Last but not least, have you heard any of the rumors about people trying to board their flights wearing Terror T-shirts and not being allowed though security checkpoints?

I have never heard of that at all. We go through all the time with Terror written all over our gear and we haven't gotten any trouble anywhere. ☞

An Interview With Bloodlined Calligraphy



Female fronted, moshier than most, and ready to beat you to a pulp, Motor City Madman (and mad-woman) Bloodlined Calligraphy give their opinion on politics, Selah Records, Christian hardcore, water fights, and favorite discs, all while preaching black power.

Ok, just need to get the basics out of the way: names, age, band duties?

Carter: Carter, 23, I play drums.
Eric- Eric, I am 24, I play bass.
Ryan- I'm Ryan, I'm 21, I play guitar.
Ally- I'm Ally, I'm 20 and I do vocals.

When/how did the band come together? How about this present incarnation?

Eric: Me and Carter met at school almost 11 years ago. I wasn't really into rock or anything, and he was but I started hanging out with him all the time. I bought a bass and we started a band, and it's pretty much been him and me ever since. That was the basis of it pretty much. We had a lot of different members and then we got Ryan on guitar. We played for a few years and then changed our name from Friction to Bloodlined Calligraphy. We put out a CD. Our old singer then quit and so we got Ally. We've been rocking out this way for about six months.

Why did you choose the name Bloodlined Calligraphy?

(laughter from everyone)

Eric: We used to be called Friction and when we signed to our first record label, they were like "is your name copyrighted?" and we said no. Turns out there is like a million Frictions in the world. So we sat down and got out the dictionary, had big band name discussions but couldn't find one. One night, we had a friend and a girl asked him to borrow a pen so she could write a boys number down on her arm. And so our friends, this guy named Eric said to her, "I'm not giving you my pen. Write it in blood. You know, bloodlined calligraphy." We all turned to each other and said that's our name.

How long have you guys been on this tour, how has it been going and what do you have up next on the road?

Carter- Touring has been going good. Cornerstone was awesome. Texas was awesome. Planning to tour as much as possible.

Eric- As soon as we get off this tour, we got a fest to play back in Michigan. Then we are going to take a couple weeks off, start writing the new record and get some tours lined up for fall and winter. Be on the lookout and check our website regularly (www.blcmosh.com.)

Jay left the band a bit ago. Has it been



hard to replace him?

We got our friend Ron filling in for us on this tour. We haven't found a fifth member yet. We're just taking our time finding the right person.

What happened with Selah Records and what made you go with Strike First/Facedown?

Our first label, Selah Record, they're great guys but they kind of got out of doing heavy bands. They weren't helping out as much as we needed them too. Jason from Facedown liked what he heard, and with our deal with Selah up, everything worked out good.

Ally, what are your views on being a woman within the hardcore/metal community? Have you received any negative/sexist comments on stage or off? More importantly, what about positive remarks? Do you look up to another female vocalists in the scene or does it not matter to you?

I get a lot of negative opinions saying that women don't belong in hardcore/metal. It doesn't really matter though because by the end of the night after they watch me, they shut their mouths. I definitely look up to Candance (Walls Of Jericho vocalist) and she has done so much for hardcore. I hope someday some girl will look up to me that way, that I can inspire someone.

Do you view yourselves as Christian band or a band with Christian members?

Eric- We're Christians. Whatever we do, it comes off like we are a Christian band but its like we all love God but our band is more about playing songs and we don't want to separate ourselves from anyone. Jesus was about acceptance. Our songs deal with issues about things you go through in life, and while some are about God, we definitely don't preach. We are always willing to talk about our beliefs with kids who want to discuss them, but mostly we are here to mosh it up and have fun.

I know a lot of Christian kids who only like bands if they are Christian, no matter how they actually sound or what level of talent they harbor. How do you feel about this situation?

Carter- I don't think you should base your opinion on a band whether they are Christian, non-Christian, whatever. If a band is good, a band is good, no matter what their beliefs are. A lot of people in the "Christian scene" do that and I don't agree with it.

Eric- A bad band is a bad band, Christian or not.
Ally- My lyrics are about how we get through life everyday with God, but they aren't meant to minister necessarily.

You recently cut your debut for Strikefirst/Facedown @ Cloud City Studios, which I think is an excellent recording. Are you satisfied with it?

Ryan- Best recording we've ever had, no doubt.
Carter- I think we can all agree with that.

What are your feelings on the upcoming election? Any party/candidate you are leaning towards?

Eric- We stay away from politics..I stick to the mosh. (laughter)
Ryan- I've got opinions, but that's all they are; opinions.
Ally- We don't even talk about politics.
Carter- If John Kerry can dance, I'll vote for him.
Whoever dances the best gets my vote.

Allan Keyes moshed it up during the 2000 election. Good times.

Eric- Got to vote for Allan Keyes. Black power!
Carter- Yeah, we need a black president.
Ally and Ryan: Black power!

How did your planned water fight at Cornerstone fest go this year? Who was the victor?

Eric and Carter: (clearly bummed out) It didn't go down!
Ally: A Love For Enemies had the most firepower. They had a gun that put mine to shame and I had one with a laser beam tracker on it! I was scared.

Best disc (any genre) you've heard this year?

Carter: Woo-hoo! Let me take that one first!
"Killswitch Engage- End Of Heartache." Go buy it.
Ally- I'm going to get so much heat for this..."Between The Buried and Me- The Silent Circus."
(everyone immediately gives Ally flak)
Ally- I know it's not as good as self titled but I love that cd.
Ryan- The new Unerath.
Eric- I was bumping that new Unerath up until about a week ago and I thought it was the hardest thing ever until I got turned onto this band called First Blood.

First Blood owns. You should check out this group featuring members of FB called Embrace the End. So good.

Eric- Sounds awesome. I will.
Ally- New Champion is amazing too.

Many bands don't like to provide explanations to their lyrics, yet you offer up some insight into your writings. Do you think it's better when bands are up front with what they are trying to say in a song, or would you prefer they leave it up to the listeners' interpretation?

Ally- Definitely, it's listeners interpretation. The lyrics I've written could be taken in a negative way, so that's why I put explanations in, to help curb any sort of misconceptions that may come about.

What do you think of the present day hardcore scene and what do you wish would change?

I wish there was acceptance of everyone, no matter what kind of music they are into. Fights need to be kept out of shows. I know sometimes they are necessary, but it's getting out of hand and is not cool.

Ryan- We're all out here to have fun.

Anything else you'd like to add?

Eric- Nah I think that about covers it.

Black power?

(everyone) Black power! ☘

An Interview With A Perfect Murder



Interview with vocalist Francois "Frank" Pellerin about their band name, Karl Buechner, the new record and language barriers.

When did A Perfect Murder get going, and what bands were you in before, individually or collectively?

It's really our first big project. We've all played in bands before but nothing big, except Carl. He played in A Death For Every Sin.

Tell me a bit about how you got hooked up with Victory, and what long time fans and new listeners can expect from your "Unbroken?"

We met Stephanie Marlow in New York city, chatted for a bit, gave her a CD and three weeks later she called us and said that the people at Victory wanted to meet us. Two weeks later we were signed; things went really fast.

APM definitely mixes up a lot of metal and hardcore styles. Was that something you sought out to do when you originally started this group?

Doing something original was really something we wanted to do, with the time we just put different influences in our music, we took the best parts of metal and hardcore and mixed them.

What is your popularity like in Canada as opposed to the United States? Do you prefer playing to hometown crowds or audiences abroad?

I really enjoy both, honestly, home is home you know. Quebec is really crazy for us, but at the

same time being able to tour in the States and get your band out there is something really special.

Is English a second language for everyone in the band or do you utilize it and your native French equally?

We always speak French together, but everyone in the band speaks English pretty easily now, with all the touring it really came down quickly.

Why did you choose the name A Perfect Murder?

It's a long story. I was not even in the band when they choose the name! It's really not from the movie with Michael Douglas! I think that Kevin took that from a Santa Sangre song.

How did you enjoy working with Karl Buechner (Earth Crisis/Freya) on "No Truce?" Are you big EC/Freya fans?

We are big EXC fans and working with Karl was really awesome; he's such an awesome singer.

Do you perform any covers live? If so, which ones and why?

We just put Metallica and Black Sabbath intros here and there, to show people our roots, you know, without these two bands heavy music wouldn't be the same today.

What's up next for A Perfect Murder in the studio and on the road?

We leave for tour today, just come to the shows and say hi! See you all on the road; don't forget to pick up our new CD "Unbroken." Thanks for the interview. ☘

An Interview With Comeback Kid



Six string master Andrew Neufeld and I talk about touring, Figure Four, Canadians and his nickname.

So how was the tour with Champion and where are you road warriors off to next?

The tour with Champion was awesome. We did about a month with them across the West Coast, Midwest and the South. It went really good; all the shows were amazing. I can't even think of a bad show. After that we did some dates with Bane and Only Crime, and FC5, who are a Japanese band. Then we did some dates w/ With Honor and Only Crime. Right now we are driving home from tour. The whole six weeks have been out have been so great. I couldn't ask for a better U.S. tour. It was our first time headlining a full U.S. tour and it went great.

Comeback Kid has only been around for a couple years now but has definitely picked up a huge amount of fans and support. Were you surprised at how popular you became, especially so quickly?

We definitely didn't have any expectations. When we first got going, we thought it was just be cool to sell some records, go on tour and have some people be into it. We definitely didn't expect the reaction we've received, and it's just been awesome. We are super grateful, and excited to see kids so excited about us. It's great to see so many kids coming out to our shows, singing along, connecting with the words. It's just a great feeling and I never expected it to get to the level it's at right now.

The band also features members of Figure Four. How do you balance out the two bands and has it been difficult?

Actually it really hasn't been that difficult. Comeback Kid has been more the priority since "Turn It Around" more than a year ago. Figure Four put out "Suffering The Loss" just over a year ago and we've done a couple tours off it. CBK has just taken more of a precedent. The other members of Figure Four have various commitments, so things have worked out well and it hasn't been too difficult.

You are often pegged as a Christian group, usually because you are on Facedown, but I really don't detect any lyrical content or on stage banter that I would consider preachy or even related to religion. Do you often get asked by fans/interviewers about your faith as a band?

We get asked that a lot. We are not a Christian band. Everyone in this band has different views as far as spirituality goes. We are four totally different people. When we first started out, we had no religious agenda or anything like that. We've never wanted to be that kind of group. Personally, I believe in Jesus and have a relationship with Him, but I'm not really big on labels. I'm a believer. Overall, as a band, we are just trying to be positive and write lyrics that people can relate to, lyrics about life. We go through a lot of stuff that other people go through.

How do you feel going from being the

frontman of a band to guitarist? Does it ever feel weird to not be behind the mic?

I actually like playing the guitar better. It puts less pressure on me. I love singing, it's great, but I just have a lot more fun on stage playing guitar. I've been playing guitar for a long time, and when I was doing Figure Four full on, there were a lot of times where I wish playing guitar. I get worn out singing. I put my all into it, like everything else I do and it takes its toll. I like playing guitar; it's a nice change after singing for so long in Figure Four.

Who does most of the writing in CBK?

I would say I do a lot of the writing. Jeremy does a bit of the writing, and Scott and I collaborate on the lyrics.

When are you guys planning on a follow up to "Turn It Around?" Release date?

We are heading into the studio in October. We already have almost all the songs written. Like I said, we are heading home right now, and we are going to practice our asses off before we record. I think it's the best material we've ever written. We are pretty excited to get it out. We are hoping to have it out by early 2005, though we are still talking to labels so I can't say for sure yet who is going to release it.

How old do the Canadian jokes get?

Pretty old. Though I don't really get any Canadian jokes anymore. Heard any good ones?

Not really. Except one awhile back. It goes: Canada volunteered 10 Battleships, 4 Jet Fighters, and 200 Soldiers to the U.S. anti-terrorism cause. After the exchange rate, that came up to 4 canoes, 2 flying squirrels and 3 Canadian Mounties.

(laughing) That's pretty good. Hadn't heard that one yet.

What is your favorite city/state to play in the US? How about abroad?

We love California. Not trying to kiss your ass or anything, but we love California.

It's all good dude. We love you too.

California is just a great state for us. This last tour, all our California shows were sold out. It was great. L.A. is an amazing place to play, so many kids came out to support us. Abroad, the U.K. was really awesome to place. Holland was fun. Our hometown of Winnipeg is always great. I could go on and on. There are so many places I love.

I've heard and known you to be quite the practical jokers. Best prank one band member has pulled on another?

I don't know. We are not the best practical jokers. I do remember this time in St. Louis though. Kyle and I went to KFC and we parked across the street. As we are walking back with our food, we saw the van with the lights on, and the van starts pulling out, and I'm freaking out because I think someone is stealing the van. I start running towards the van and then I realize when I get up to the van that it's Jeremy screwing with us. (laughing) I guess it's not that great or funny of story. I don't know.

Maybe your reputation precedes you.

(laughing) Yeah dude, you just ruined my reputation.

How did you get the nickname Goose?

I got it from my family, when I was kid. That's just what they used to call me. There's not really much of a story behind it.

Damn. I thought it was going to be a Top Gun reference or something.

(laughing) Nope. ☹

An Interview With Crisis



Karyn Crisis, the band's vocalist discusses their new record, *The End*, touring with Soulfly and Ill Nino, favorite songs and women in the scene.

Can you give a brief history of the band?

Crisis was started in 1993 by Afzaal, Gia, our original drummer Fred, and myself. I met Afzaal through a mutual friend and was invited to audition for them at their next rehearsal. We all had an instant musical connection once we started jamming, which I think took us all by surprise, because it was so intense! Soon after we recorded our first demo "Home" followed by 5 more songs which became "8 Convulsions", originally available on cassette which we sold at all the shows we played over the east coast. In 1995 we signed to Metal Blade Records and in 1996 put out "Deathshead

Extermination," followed by "The Hollowing" in 1997. Not long after that we got out of our contract with Metal Blade because we didn't want to give them the 3rd album we owed to them. Once off the label we moved to L.A. at the turn of the millennium on the search for a record label who would take a risk! We were tired of being told we were too extreme, and that we had no marketing appeal because I was a female. We found a new drummer in 2003 and began to write our new album, which is out now on The End Records, "Like Sheep Led To Slaughter".

What are your feelings on your latest record, "Like Sheep Led To Slaughter"?

I love it. It feels good to be 'home' in Crisis again. It's a testament to the 11 year struggle we endure

and carry on.

How are things going with The End?

Excellent. We are so happy to have found a label that really has our interests at heart, who is all about the music.

What happened with Metal Blade?

We got lost in the shuffle of bands that were a priority on that label. We just didn't get the support we needed. We did NOT get dropped from Metal Blade- we dropped them. We had our lawyer get us out of our contract.

Are you excited for your upcoming tour with Soulfly and Ill Nino? What other shows/tours do you have going after that?

We're all eager to get on the road again. That's our favorite place to be. That tour ends on Sept 14th, so we're working on other tours now to hop on once this one finishes.

How did recording with Billy Anderson go?

Great. He's a pleasure to work with- a real master of his craft. We wanted to do a live-sounding album and he wanted the same thing. It was a blast.

Is Skullsick Nation still around?

No.

Out of all the songs you've written in your career, what are some of your favorites?

Hard to say, depends on the day: the entire new album, "Working out the Graves," "Prisoner Scavenger," "There Goes My Soul," "Rotten Anyway," "Surviving the Siren", "Nowhere but Lost," "The Watcher"

Crisis was one of the first female fronted bands in extreme music. How do you feel seeing the growing contingent of women in metal and hardcore and do you see yourself as a pioneer for ladies in the scene?

I don't really see my singing style as being similar to the other females in metal and hardcore right now. I explore both the male and female sides of myself through my vocals- I don't just follow in the footsteps of the male singers in these genres and simply follow their rules- I make my own, I use a wider range of expression. So in that sense the new female singers can't be compared to me. But I am glad there are more and more getting a voice in the industry! That's part of progress, change. Back in 1993 when Crisis started, the part of progress that Crisis contributed was indeed a pioneering one, in that we stood against the grain. It was not cool at that time to have a female fronting a heavy band. It was not cool for me to be singing in such an expressive way. It was not easy, and there was no bandwagon for us to jump on. We had to pave our own way.

I read about your video for "Blood Burden," but haven't seen it yet. Did you already film it and if so, are you happy with the end result?

Yes. It's on about 50 local cable channels and Headbanger's Ball.

Any last words or shout outs?

Thanks for your support. Check out our Street Team webpage.....

www.CrisisFanatic.com
<http://myspace.com/crisis>
<http://firesofsorrow.homestead.com/>
<http://profile.myspace.com/users/4117201>
http://www.fotolog.net/_crisis/
<http://www.livejournal.com/community/crisis/>
<http://www.prophecy21.com/7/crisis/crisis.html>

An Interview With Set Your Goals



Name/age/band duties?

Jordan: My name is Jordan Brown. I am twenty years old and I sing in Set Your Goals.

Matt: My name is Matt Wilson, I am twenty one and I also sing in Set Your Goals.

That's a keeper.

(more laughter)

Matt: Anyways this girl is getting double teamed and one of the guys goes "I'm going to spray 31 flavors all over your face" and before he blows he says "here comes the ice cream surprise!"

(we all roll over laughing)

Jordan: Holy shit.

Matt: Yeah, it was awesome.

Jordan: I've never actually rented a video. Someone started a thread on the hardcoremusic.com board about alien porn. Aliens basically probing girls with various rayguns and whatnot and they shot these liquids...

Intergalactic jizz?

Jordan: (laughing) Yeah, intergalactic jizz. The were-wolf porn thread was pretty interesting as well.

When did you get started? Did you have any ideas of what you wanted to sound like before you started playing together?

Matt: Yeah, we kind of did. Over a year ago I approached Jordan and said I wanted to start a melodic band. Wasn't sure if I was going for a hardcore/pop punk mix, but that's pretty much what it became. We wanted to sound like the Movielife, Kid Dynamite, and Lifetime.

Jordan: We wanted to sound like bands we were into. Any Dan Yemin band has been really influential for me. The Movielife could very well be my all time favorite band. We're really into Civ and Gorilla Biscuits. We've got hardcore song structures and we wanted to maintain the integrity of the lyrical content of most hardcore bands, but still be able to appeal to kids outside of the hardcore scene. That was really important to us.

Set Your Goals is the name of song/record by Civ. Why did you choose it for your moniker?

Jordan: It's not really like a tribute to Civ or anything, but it's more like the mindset of this band. We are going to go forward and do this. We've come a ways and this what we want to do. This is our goal that we've set, so to speak.

Matt: You can't achieve your goals in life unless you know what they are. I think a guidance counselor in high school said that to me once. It's true though.

Once you have them in mind, you just have to follow



through.

On a similar note, who are your other influences?

Jordan: I think this is a question we should take individually. Though a lot of our influences are the same, we do have some different ones. Bands like New Found Glory, H2O, Civ, Towards An End, Kid Dynamite, Turning Point, In My Eyes.

Matt: Gorilla Biscuits is my favorite hardcore band. They will always have an impact on whatever band I may be in. The Movielife, Reach The Sky, those bands were really important.

Jordan: I'd really like to stress the point that most pop punk bands sing songs about girls and heartbreak and stuff, and while that's a part of life, there is so much more to sing about and we wanted to stay away from solely focusing on those issues. We want to keep our lyrics more real and down to earth. Songs about family problems, just everyday life, things everyone can relate to and sing along to. I love the connection we can achieve from kids hearing the words and finding something in them, us singing those words to them and them singing those same words back. It's such a great feeling. Like "Latch Key" for instance, that's one of the most powerful and important songs on the record, and it's one I'll let Matt talk about...

Matt: Yeah. Basically, when I was in high school, I could home and my father would never be there. I'd just come home to a big empty house. My parents divorced when I was six. My mother was never mentally there because she was always drinking. It's so cathartic for me to be able to write those lyrics. I can express that and get that out, especially since I don't talk about it that much and I can sing those words and kids who can relate can sing them back, and that's awesome.

Jordan: Even our friends have come up to us, and said how much the lyrics have meant and that's so

rad.

Matt: Definitely. That's why we stay away from a lot of the songs like "you break my heart, etc."

You guys definitely play hardcore with a very poppy edge or pop that carries a strong slant towards heaviness, whichever way you want to look at it. Kind of a misfit blend. How have people reacted to your sound?

Jordan: The first shows were amazing. God bless the Internet is all I have to say. Before, when all had was a demo, when no one was going to put it out, we put it up there and the reaction was incredible. We had like 3,000 hits on hxcmp3.com. Kids really liked it. All of it has been way above what we expected.

Matt: The thing that really gives me conviction in this band is that it really makes me believe in myself. This is the only thing I've ever done in my life where I've never been told I'm not good enough and I think that alone is a sign that I should pursue it and I shouldn't let anyone stop me. I just want to take it and run with it. I'd love to tour with this band year round.

Who writes the lyrics in the band and what do you seek to express with them?

Matt: We both write lyrics. Some songs Jordan did, some songs I did.

Jordan: Lyrically, it will always be one of us or both of us working together. Musically, even before we got a real full on band going, Matt and I had been sitting down and just writing songs together. Matt had never actually played an instrument before but he has a real gift for music and I would play parts and he would let me know how he thought things should go and he basically ended up writing a lot of stuff. Like, he wrote the majority of "Latch Key." It all just came together really well.

You are a band with two vocalists. Was that something you planned from the beginning and how do you work out who sings what part of the song?

Jordan: I originally pitched the idea to Matt and he was kind of mixed about it. Of course this was long before we recorded the demo, played shows and saw how well things worked. Our practices are so much fun. We just goof off. The chemistry of the band is great. We didn't work out a lot of the vocal placement until we were in the studio. We kind of winged it, and things came out really good. We are experimenting more now, and things have been going good. We definitely are really excited about our new material.

Matt: Originally when we started the band I was going to sing and he was going to play guitar. We found another guitarist though, and now we have the two vocalist setup and I think it adds a lot. Jordan and I have a great chemistry on stage. It's cool to have someone else singing on stage with me. It's fun.

In the same vein, who is the primary songwriter or are there multiple individuals responsible?

Matt: Jordan is a songwriting genius, especially when it comes to the pop influenced stuff. He usually comes to the band with a skeleton of a song and we all help to revise it. We get the ball going together and everything works out.

Jordan: It takes everyone in the band to make a song great. I come with the basic song structures, but it takes all of us to make it happen.

You are all members of the hardcore/metal scene. Is being part of a more mainstream sounding act a way to buck the system so to speak, an escape or a way to carry on some of the inaccessible elements of extreme music to an often rigid Top 40 structure and breathe new life into the genre?

Jordan: You definitely are right in saying you don't hear a lot of bands like that. Especially in the Bay Area. I'm not going to say there haven't been any bands like us before, because obviously there have

been with groups like Towards An End. You just don't hear it much around here anymore.

Matt: There are a lot of conventional hardcore bands coming out of the Bay Area right now and there is nothing wrong with that at all, because a lot of them are great bands, but we wanted to do something different. Sure, there are going to be some kids who aren't into it; oh well. The reactions at the first few shows have been so amazing, better than I could have ever dreamed.

Jordan: I'm glad to see hardcore kids getting into it; I'd be lying if I said that didn't matter to me. Those kids, my friends, are the ones I value above all others and to have them share this with me is incredible. There are a few bad apples in the scene but the majority of the kids are sincere and that's rad. I hope lots of different kids get into us though. Pop punk doesn't really seem to have a scene of its own, and I kind of hope that maybe we can be a sort of "gateway drug" into the hardcore scene, helping kids to discover bands like Gorilla Biscuits. I think that would be amazing. Matt: We may not be the most hardcore sounding band, but we are all hardcore kids. We stay true to the hardcore ethic. Even if we got huge somehow, and got \$2000 guarantees, we'd still play backyard shows. Jordan: Fuck yes!

Sweet. Set Your Goals vs. the Prom.
(laughter)

I really liked the layout of your website (www.setyourgoals.net) I think mainly because it's one of the first sites I've seen from a hardcore band that didn't have blood spatter, skulls, crossbones, lesbians killing each other, etc. I mean it looks like the Good Humor website or something. Seriously amazing. Who designed it?
(Matt and Jordan both laugh)

Jordan: That's awesome.

Matt: We are so sick of the typical thing you see in hardcore. I mean our shirts have rockets on them. We were so tired of the blood spatter, the skulls, all that stuff. I'm just tired.

Jordan: Big props to Roy Woods, who designed that site. He also designed the Crime In Stereo website and runs twelvefour.net. He does this for a living, but does our site and Crime In Stereo's for free. We've offered him money but he refuses. We just want to give a huge amount of thanks to him.

Any upcoming tour plans?

Jordan: We'll be touring with the Warriors and Make Move the day after Christmas up and down the West Coast, plus Arizona and Nevada. We have some Bay Area and Sacramento shows also, but we are trying to focus on writing for the most part and not fall victim to playing out too much. Our drummer graduates high school this year and after he does, we'll take this more into full time status.

Matt: I just want to say I'm super hyped about the tour with the Warriors. One of the best bands in hardcore. (Jordan and I both give nods in agreement)

What is your favorite part about being in this band?

Jordan: Everyone in this band is a close friend, not just an acquaintance. I've played in bands with Mikey and Dan before, and it was rad. We all spend a lot of time together outside of the band and shows. We get into little arguments, but forget about them like ten minutes afterwards. It's nice to have relationships with people like that. This band is what I live for, I love the music.

Matt: I've seen other bands that I've known and been friends with, and those other bands weren't all friends and it's just not the same. We all hang out together almost everyday, and I think that's a really great experience. Touring is especially going to be fun. Basically just a huge roadtrip with my best friends with the added bonus of getting play to every night. What could be better? ☿

An Interview With Vile

Guitarist Colin Davis talks metal, band logos, foreign labels, and Leonard Nimoy.

I know Vile has been going for some time now. When did it all begin, what have been some of the line up changes and what were your aspirations for this band?

It would be nice to get a group of guys together that wanted to take this to the highest level underground music can go. Play Ozzfest, etc. We have changed second guitarist positions twice, used a fill in singer for two tours and have used several different drummers. It sucks but the core members are still here and life goes on.

You recently dropped a new record "Depopulate" on Listenable Records. What made you decide to go with them and what happened with Relapse? How do you like being on a label that is not based in this country? Does it make business more difficult or have you found the international music market more receptive to your sound (as tends to be the case)? Do you find you are getting the distribution you want with Unique Leader?
I love that label. Doesn't matter that they are in Europe. We have a separate deal for US distribution and the French label does great work. The owner is very honest and very cool. And since the Euro is stronger than the dollar, royalties are better!

It's been quite a few years between your last full length "Stench of The Deceased" and your latest. What caused the delay and what are your feelings on "Depopulate"? How do the two records differ and what are your plans for the next record?

Well it's actually been two years since Depopulate came out! But yeah it's our newest release. Its more modern, faster and has a different feel to it. The first album was more like mid nineties Florida style shit and this album is more in the direction of Nile, Hate Eternal, etc. All of our stuff has a certain kind of emphasis on groove that is unique to us, but I think this album has less obvious influences on it than "Stench of The Deceased." The new album will be done this winter and is quite diverse with more black metal parts mixed in. It will not sound like either of our past efforts though.

How did the tour with Cannibal Corpse go?

It was awesome! Those guys are super cool and we really thank them for adding us to the tour. All the shows smoked and we picked up a lot of fans. Was a great experience overall.

Juan has a studio, Trident, that the band records at. Do other bands utilize the studio and if so, how can acts who might be interested get a hold of him? With a member at the boards and in an environment where you have I'm assuming unlimited time, do you find things go more smoothly, with less constraints? If you had the chance to go into a big name studio of your choice with a favorite producer of the bands, would you?

Well right now there's not much we would gain by going to a bigger studio. Trident has just been upgraded and Juan has a Neve V3 60 console, Pro Tools HD 3 and a huge new live room. We can rent whatever gear he lacks and we have the luxury of time, as you said. Juan and myself produce metal and death metal



for a living so we wouldn't want anyone else touching our shit anyway! Having a lot of time is good and bad. Good because you can do what you want to do and bad because you procrastinate. Trident is pretty busy now though and so we don't have unlimited time. The band still pays for the time although at a discount rate, so money can and will run out. We have to go in just as prepared as anyone.

I definitely feel that Vile is a highly underrated band. Why do you think there is a lack of notoriety? I mean that in the mainstream sense. Obviously you guys are consistently given high critical press and remain respected amongst many different metal bands, yet you guys don't carry the "household name" status of some similar sounding acts. Do you think that is from poor label backing, lack of touring, a combination of the two, maybe something else?
I think it's been both of those things. We don't tour that much because of band member issues and so bigger labels don't want to pick us up. If we could get the member thing settled, we could get up to that level you mentioned. But really, it's hard because as you get older and get a career and all that, it's hard to leave to go on tours that you lose money on. But if I could get the member thing down, we could definitely do a lot more touring and then bigger labels would be more interested. I do have some label plans in the works now that I won't mention, but I'm trying to settle in a happy medium.

You guys are from the Bay Area. Have you had the chance to check out some of the new metal/hardcore acts and if so, what do you think of them? Any particular faves? Outside of Northern California, is there a band that has impressed you?

Well sure there are lots of bands that are new or new-ish that I like. But I don't know about American shit. I like Behemoth from Poland, Scarve from France, Dimmu Borgir from Norway, Blindsided from Sweden, After Forever from Holland. There are others but yeah, most of the stuff I'm finding that is different and original that's up my alley is not coming from America. I hope that changes.

What's up next for Vile and where can people find out more information about the band?

Check out our website. www.vilestench.com You can e mail me about Trident studios or my Mastering Studio called Imperial Mastering there. We post the tours there, merch, etc.

In my opinion, Vile has the best metal band logo ever. Who designed it?

Thanks. We did get lucky with that one. And it helps us with merch a lot. This artist named Jonzig from Austin, Texas designed it. He also painted our first album cover and influenced the Depopulate cover as well. He has done a lot of death metal band's album covers and logos. Fortunately for us, our logo still seems to stand out. Brutal and gory looking, but still readable. Thanks Jonzig!!

Favorite scene in a horror film?

Scene in Invasion of the Body snatchers where Leonard Nimoy is trying to calm all the people at a party who say a relative seems to be possessed. ☿



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PROFILE: FEAR BEFORE THE MARCH OF FLAMES

By Peewee

NAME:

David Marion

POSITION IN THE BAND:

Vocals

HOMETOWN:

Aurora, Colorado

FEAR BEFORE THE MARCH OF FLAMES SOUNDS LIKE:

Botch, Converge, Zao.

OUR LABEL (EQUAL VISION) IS COOL BECAUSE:

They believe in our band and we believe in them as a label... Kinda like one big happy family. Just the way we like it.

FOUR CD'S THAT ARE INFLUENCING ME THE MOST RIGHT NOW:

Sigur Ros ~ (), A Life Once Lost ~ A Great Artist, Converge ~ You Fall Me, Smashing Pumpkins ~ Adore

BEST THING TO DO IN THE VAN IS:

Sleep and listen to music.... I wish I could read magazines but I start to feel sick if I do, I need to get better at that.

WORST DRIVING INCIDENT INVOLVED:

Me falling asleep on the highway and rolling the trailer. I could have killed us all!

COLORADO HAS INFLUENCED OUR MUSIC IN THE SENSE THAT:

We all know we have to work extra hard to get our band recognition and out on tour full time.

THE KIDS THESE DAYS ARE:

Very mixed. I see a ton that are ungrateful and jaded. And then there are



the ones that still care, that haven't lost the real reason they enjoy music and going to shows... I wish there were more of them out there... I'll join them in the front singing along with some of my favorite bands.

SPORTS TEAM?

Angels.

DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN OR PEDRO THE LION?

Pedro The Lion.

BEER OR SHOT?

Both!

UPCOMING TOURS OR RELEASES:

We are on tour right now with A Life Once Lost, The Red Chord, and Evergreen Terrace. After that we go out in with Throwdown and Norma Jean for our CD release tour! Our new CD 'ART DAMAGE' is out on Equal Vision Records. Then I think a tour with Vaux in October. It should be a killer time all around!

VEGETARIAN OR MEAT?

Meat.

WHEN WE'RE NOT ON TOUR WE EARN OUR LIVING BY:

I think right now we are all only touring for a living... money is tight... so I work at a fast food joint if we are back for more than a couple of weeks. It blows but what can you do?

FAVORITE THING ABOUT PLAYING SHOWS:

I can pretty much do whatever I feel like doing. I'm allowed to be a freak for a half hour and get out everything I need to get out. I love crowd participation! When kids are helping me sing words to our songs, it's an amazing feeling not many people have the privilege of knowing!

BAND THAT STILL GIVES ME THE CHILLS WHEN I SEE THEM LIVE:

ZAO... Dan's vocals are just so good. And I've been a fan for so long. The real reason I ever wanted to be in a band like this.

WEB INFO:

www.marchofflames.com, www.equalvision.com, www.livejournal.com/community/march_of_flames

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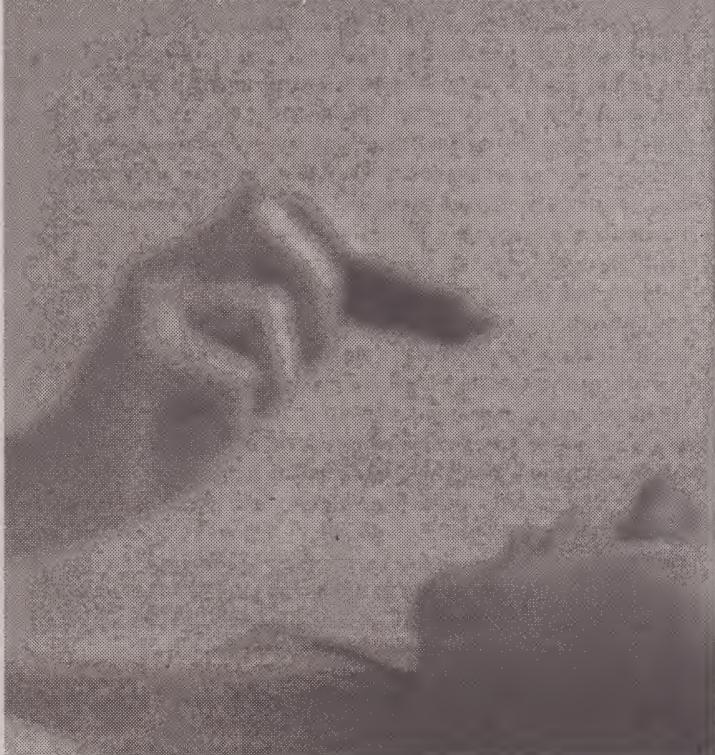


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ALAN BISBORT

SEPTEMBER ENTRY:
THE ROCK OF DEATH 'N' ROLL

Not too long ago, a seemingly desperate college student sought me out as, and I quote, "an authority on rock 'n' roll" (ha). He's somehow conned his teacher (and himself) into believing that I'm some sort of oracle for his term paper, the subject of which was to answer that same old rusty question: Is rock 'n' roll dead?

A good case has always been possible to make for the demise of rock 'n' roll (just the continued existences of Rod Stewart and Billy Joel are proof enough). But it struck me, in trying to answer Joe College, that he was asking the wrong question. The more appropriate question would be: Are American music buyers braindead or just tone deaf, or both? It seems pretty obvious that rock 'n' roll, as a musical form, will never be dead, just people's ability to appreciate it.

Anyhow, the following is the response I sent him at East Wal-Mart Bible College:

Rock 'n' roll, as I said before, has not spent itself as a creative force but as a cultural force—something that moves large bodies of people in thematic/political/semi-spiritual unison—it is dead and buried. I don't know even if it suddenly made an assault on the Billboard charts again (there isn't a whiff of rock 'n' roll/punk/power pop among the top 50 or 100 albums on the charts today; it's all the dregs of rap, quasi torch songs, histrionic warblers, hair-weaved cat-erwaulers and other really wretched shit) that it could reclaim its former position as the mirror of its time the way, say, the Beatles circa *Sgt. Pepper's* or the Stones circa *Let It Bleed* or even the Sex Pistols' *Never Mind the Bollocks* and the Clash's *London Calling* did. Too much has changed in the way of commodifying the music. It's all a commodity, and I don't think I'm being nostalgic when I say that, for me, rock 'n' roll transcended the taint of merchandizing that colored nearly every other transaction one was forced to make in life. Saving my money made from bussing tables and washing dishes and mowing lawns to buy the *Shine On Brightly* album by Procol Harum was a quasi-religious act. It wasn't like going into a franchise to buy a cheeseburger or get a tattoo. It was below the radar of the mainstream and allowed me a sense of being tuned into something important and inviolable and incorruptible.

Here's a quote from my book *Rhino's Psychedelic Trip* that explains this feeling as best as I can explain it (I also enjoy quoting myself): "In the late 1960s, it was music made and received at the frontiers of consciousness by people who were looking to (in Jim Morrison's words) 'break on through to the other side.' Needless to say, it was not enjoyed or understood by cheerleaders, younger sisters, the malt-shop crowd, bullies, athletes, frat boys, policemen, clergymen, people who worked under car hoods, Republicans, schoolteachers (except for the hip biology teacher who got busted for selling pot), elected officials, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Nixon-Agnew, your parents, and your friends' parents. everyone over the age of 30, it was safe to assume, was ignorant and disapproving of all that psychedelia [I'd add here all rock 'n' roll] represented. How could it be otherwise?"

Rock 'n' roll then was confrontational music; it was to-the-barri- cades music. We did not feel like we were kidding around when we sang along with music that called for revolution, any sort of revolution, even if it were a revolution of the mind. There was a palpable sense of exactly what Jim Morrison sang in "Five to One": "They've got the guns but we've got the numbers." It sure felt that way at the time.

You have to remember the socio-political context. Vietnam was slowly slaughtering, physically and psychologically traumatizing an entire generation of young American men. We had only become aware (the first Earth Day wasn't until 1970) of just how badly the "military-industrial complex" had poisoned our air and water. The leaders we liked were being assassinated right and left. Cities were aflame with riots. And then they started shooting students who were protesting the war, at Kent State and Jackson State universities, and Black Panthers who were confronting racism. Come to think of it, the ingredients are all here in 2004 for a similar situation to unfold. In fact, if college aged men and women such as yourself and your classmates are not pissed off at GW Bush and Dick "Go Fuck Yourself" Cheney, I really don't think there's much hope for this country and the medical prognosis of rock 'n' roll is so meaningless and miniscule compared to that...Complete apathy and/or rabid patriotism are not appropriate responses to the damage this crew is currently doing. I can tell you from having experienced Nixon firsthand, that Tricky Dick and his hand puppet Spiro were practically saints compared to Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Rove and all the other house goons on their payroll.

As for the commodifying dissent and rock 'n' roll, I'd recommend you read Thomas Frank's *The Conquest of Cool*. The best writing on rock 'n' roll is by Lester Bangs and Richard Meltzer. Get *Psychotic Reaction* and *Carburetor Dung* and *Mainlines*, *Blood Feasts*, and *Bad Taste* by the former and *A Whore Like All the Rest* by the latter. Nobody else is really worth reading. By all means, avoid anything that has Jim DeRogatis' name in it or on it.

As for what I listen to now that evokes the best of the late 1960s that's mentioned in my book, I'd include: American Music Club, NOFX, Rancid, Jawbreaker, Mike Watt, Replacements/Paul Westerberg, R.E.M., U2, Neil Young (still going strong), Dinosaur Jr., The Stone Roses, Robyn Hitchcock, Belle & Sebastian, Death Cab for Cutie, Starsailor, and whatever else that's in my tape player at the moment. These are just off the top of my head. There are so many other talented and interesting musicians, so much good music. The paradox is that there is just as much good music (if not more) being produced today as back then, even if it does not seem to make a dent in the armor of the Bush Era. It's now just a product, something to buy and own, like a razor blade or a douche bag. Back then, I honestly felt as though rock 'n' roll was the only reason to get out of bed in the morning.

On some days, as the joints harden, the formerly shoulder-length hair disappears, the stomach sags, I still feel that way.

Alan Bisbort is a columnist for the *Hartford Advocate*. His most recent publication is *What Happened Here? African-American History* (Pomegranate). ☛

ALAN BISBORT

OCTOBER ENTRY: OUT OF THE BUSH DARKNESS IS THAT LIGHT AN ONCOMING TRAIN?

In my darker moments over the past four years of our Bush Nightmare, I've found myself thinking that the more natural state for humans is fascism and war. How else to explain what is taking place in America?

No societies, no nations, no historical periods have been exempt from fascism and war, and to live in the delusion that "it can't happen here" is more than a dangerous fantasy; it's life-threatening. It happened in Italy, Germany and Japan—three of the most advanced nations of their day—during the lifetimes of many who are still with us. And, during 5,600 years of written history, there have been 14,600 recorded wars, or nearly three per year. In other words, war—more often provoked by fear and exploited by fascism—is more "normal" than peace.

The United States of America has made a fetish out of proclaiming its freedoms, democracy and tolerance, and yet these words are just hollow rhetoric coming out of the mouth of GW Bush.

Free speech? Sure, we can wag our tongues all we want, but the right wing owns the media. To pretend it doesn't is to live in a delusional state. This is, of course, exactly where Bush and his propaganda machine wants you. In case you haven't noticed, dissenting messages aren't heard where it counts: in the corridors of power. For example, my Congressional representative (a Republican) refused to honor a prearranged appointment to meet with me—as the representative of a commission from my town government—because she'd found out, in the interim, I'd written negative things about her political positions in AN ALTERNATIVE PUBLICATION. The message is clear: you step out of line, you lose the right to speak your mind. When you lose your right to speak your mind, and you accept this as part of life in a democracy, you are brain-washed.

Freedom of religion? Don't insult me. This is a Christian fundamentalist nation. Period. Read Jon Krakauer's *Under the Banner of Heaven* for the scarifying proof. And Christian fundamentalists, to a person, see others who don't share their hysterical faith as heathens or "evil" and would gladly see them exterminated. James Hillman, in his brilliant new book, *A Terrible Love Of War* (Penguin), writes, "Christian monotheistic psychology is the one for our culture to focus upon and fear...There is much to fear! American Christianity in particular, because the U.S. wields the most military power and is at the same time the most Christian of nations."

By sheer numbers, Hillman said, Christianity rules America. Add to this dominance the literalism of Christian belief (90% believe the Virgin Birth, 60% Revelations) and the innocence of that belief, which can profess love while fomenting war. Appeals to this one Christian god for peace have never worked. "Either he can't stop war or he doesn't want to," writes Hillman. "The first rebuts his claim to almightiness and the second implies that he likes war, or at least by not stopping it, he sustains it."

None of this is possible without hypocrisy. "Hypocrisy in America is not a sin but a necessity and a way of life," Hillman said. "It makes possible armories of mass destruction side by side with the proliferation of churches, cults, and charities. Hypocrisy holds the nation together so that it can preach, and practice what it does not preach."

Freedom of assembly? Go test out your freedom of assembly in front of the White House. Oh, you might want to bring your own

body bags; otherwise, they'll just hose your remains into the gutter and let the buzzards pick at your entrails.

America has gone so far off the rails under GW Bush that we don't even resemble the same nation we were in 2000. This transcends partisan politics or election year rhetoric. We were respected around the world then. Now we are hated and feared, even among allies of the West. To paraphrase that tourist slogan, all that most Americans got out of this bum trip was this stupid T-shirt. You know the one. It reads, "THESE COLORS DON'T RUN" or "KILL THEM ALL, LET GOD SORT THEM OUT" or some other slogan extracted from Ted Nugent's butt crack.

The paradox is this: The worse things get, the more outrageous the assaults on our freedoms, the more callow the excuses and the more obscene the violence and violation, the more America fawns over the fascists who are responsible. Let's face it. America loves a man with his hard on.

The lesson, then, is America is not exempt from fascism. Or, put another way, Americans are as human as any other people. Ever since they crawled out of the caves and stood upright, humans have been hounded by fears: of being eaten, of death, of the sky, of loud noises, of eclipses, of comets, of sea serpents, of their own shadows, of other humans with different languages, different hair and skin colors, different foods and clothes. Fear is the great handmaiden of fascism. Just check out the list of Fascist heroes who've paved the path for Bush: Genghis Khan, Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Pope Not So Innocent, Henry VIII, Napoleon, Mussolini, Hitler, Pol Pot, Idi Amin, Papa and Baby Doc Duvalier, the Shah, the Saudi Royal Family.

The one difference between America in 2000 and the societies ruled by the above tyrants is this: none but the USA hailed itself as a democracy, an "experiment," a "beacon of freedom." We were meant for better things than GW Bushit.

Those are my darker thoughts.

In my more less pessimistic moments, I've felt pangs of hope that humankind is evolving toward democracy, even if America is devolving away from it. Election monitors are sent to young democracies to assure fair vote counts. More nations are turning to democracy than ever before, airing things out at the United Nations, signing on to important international treaties regarding climate change and land mines and overpopulation (even if the U.S. is conspicuously absent from them). After all, the more elevated state in an evolving human civilization is toward democracy. That's why America was such a beacon of hope for the 224 years before GW Bush. It was the "great experiment," the living proof that democracy was not just possible but inevitable.

I have seen glimmers of light in the darkness shone by such truth tellers as Howard Dean, James Jeffords, Seymour Hersh, Jody Williams, Tim Robbins, Susan Sarandon, Steve Earle, Jimmy Carter, Barak Obama, Al Franken, Michael Moore, Errol Morris. I have regained hope through such ad hoc efforts as Moveon.org, Punkvoter.com, Rock Against Bush (Two deafening volumes!), Norman Sommer's Umbrella Movement that operates under the slogan "The Right Is Wrong." Even mainstream rockers like Springsteen going on the major networks to denounce Bush has lifted my spirits after a bout of Bush Fatigue that made me despair.

We need this, because every day another hard-earned right is lost to us. Think I exaggerate? Check your pay stub. Thanks to Bush's right wing whack jobs, you're no longer getting overtime pay. You didn't notice? Too busy watching "Survivor"? Masturbating to Paris Hilton sex videos? Those extra ten hours you sweated clearing pallets or slinging "freedom fries" at obese customers are at the same pay as the first 40 hours. No more time and a half. It's minimum wage from here on out.

ALAN BISBORT

You can thank George W. Bush for that.

And there's much, much more headed your way, as well, if Bush is allowed to be America's tyrant for four more years: no more Social Security, death face down in the Iranian dust, premature death from higher mercury, arsenic, carbon monoxide, unchecked pesticide use, due to gutted environmental legislation. Oh, the possibilities are endless.

And you say you're not going to vote?

Last month, Sen. Gordon Smith, a knuckle-dragging Republican from the formerly progressive state of Oregon (what were Oregonians thinking when they elected this Neanderthal?) said what is arguably the stupidest thing an American politician who is not GW Bush has said this year. Perhaps Bushlexia rubbed off on him because Smith was quoted during a conference call arranged by the Bush campaign, saying, "It's not John Kerry's fault that he looks French."

Since a person's physical traits are now campaign fodder, allow me to offer some feedback from the other side.

It's not Gordon Smith's fault that he looks like a sack of rotting melons festooned with pubic lice grubs.

It's not George W. Bush's fault that he looks like a pretzel-eating chimp wearing his wife's tight panties. It's not Dick Cheney's fault that he looks like Hannibal Lecter's pen pal. It's not Karl Rove's fault that he looks like Herr Karl Roverer, last seen cavorting in

crotch-hugging leather shorts outside a Munich beer hall in 1923. It's not Condi Rice's fault that she looks like Maya Angelou's abandoned love child.

It's not Tom DeLay's fault that he looks like the end result of a forced breeding between a pit bull and a weasel. It's not Rick Santorum's fault that he looks like the end result of an act of bestiality between a Sicilian pedophile and a Scottish terrier. It's not Dennis Hastert's fault that he looks like a pair of Tip O'Neill's soiled and discarded jockey briefs. It's not Henry Hyde's fault that he looks like a greeter at a failing Vegas casino. It's not Trent Lott's fault that he looks like a fading lounge singer on a Biloxi casino barge. It's not James Inhofe's fault that he looks like one of the guys who was bugging Ned Beatty in Deliverance.

It's not Rush Limbaugh's fault that he looks like a giant anal cyst.

It's not Ann Coulter's fault that she looks like a hot water bottle with a blond wig.

It's not Bill O'Reilly's fault that he looks like a large gnarled scrotum.

Alan Bisbort is a columnist for the Hartford Advocate. It's not his fault he looks like Liam Neesen. His most recent publication is What Happened Here? Washington D.C. (Pomegranate). ☞

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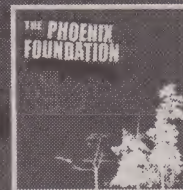
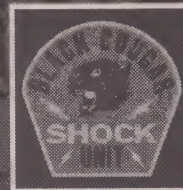


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SLUMLORDS

BALTIMORE CITY HARDCORE

By Jamey Jasta

How's Baltimore treating you outside of the band? Give us an update on the scene there. It's always been great but tell us about some new bands.

Baltimore is great, it's totally become home for me the short while I've been here. Definitely one of the most sketchy cities I've ever been to, let alone lived in...but I love it. As far a scene goes, it's one of the best I've ever seen. We have a lot of awesome bands from the Baltimore/DC area and people actually come out to all types of different shows. For such a small city, there's a lot going on and it remains a pretty tight knit community. Our scene is really diverse, we have a lot of good bands playing every style. My favorite Baltimore band lately is The Spark. They play really fast hardcore like Charles Bronson or Los Crudos...their new ep is awesome. I've also been really into the Dead End Boys and Fighting Chance records as of late. Awesome Baltimore City Oil/Street Rock bands. The Screws from DC are really good too.

Are you officially a US citizen now? Do your friends back in Canada think you're a sell out?

I officially got my green card a few a few months ago, thus making me a permanent resident. Sell out Canada? Never. Maple Syrup, Tim Hortons, Toonies, and free medical care are enough to keep me from ever abandoning ship. Remember that time...I think it was Lou Boulder that had a handful of \$2 coins, and was like 'What the hell are these?' and threw them on the ground. Canadians profit on confusing tourists with our strange currency, and expensive vending machine items that accept this \$2 coin. I've got a sweet retirement fund waiting for me.

Who's the best Canadian band in your humble opinion?

If we're talking all time, then hands down it's THOR. If we're talking current hardcore bands, since Haymaker is done, I'm gonna go with Final Word from Montreal. One of the best live band's I've ever seen and super awesome dudes as well. Blue Monday is also doing really well right now, and are great! No Warning is poised to be huge which rules, I remember booking



their first band's show when they were all like 14 years old and now they're touring with Snoop! Fucked Up, Kill Decibel, A Perfect Murder, Taste For Blood, Cannonball, Cursed...there's tons of good stuff coming out up there...very nice.

I just got your CD from I-Scream Records, those guys have been hyping you up in Europe, any plans to tour there?

They've been doing an awesome job, as have Perfect Victim over here in the US. Only difference is in Europe, a grind-core band isn't outselling us with a parrot on vocals. (They're called Hatebeak, on Reptilian Records). The best part about being on I Scream, is getting random phone calls from Onno Cro-Mag just to talk rock. He tells the best stories... Once he was telling me about the singer of a certain band getting smart with him, so he

dunked his head in a fish tank and nearly drowned him to teach him a lesson in respect. He's like the Arnold Schwarzenegger of hardcore, plus he has the best phone voice ever. We've been getting a great response from Europe ever since the demo came out and the new CD is doing great so...hopefully we'll be over there sometime next year. Everyone just needs to keep harassing I Scream and Mad Marc.

It's great to see Jeff singing again, were you a big Breakdown fan? Did you have to convince him to get onstage again or did you start the band together?

In my opinion Breakdown was one of the best NYHC bands ever. Right up there with early Agnostic Front, Sick Of It All, Murphy's Law and Sheer Terror. The demo still makes me want to destroy everything, and is one of the angriest



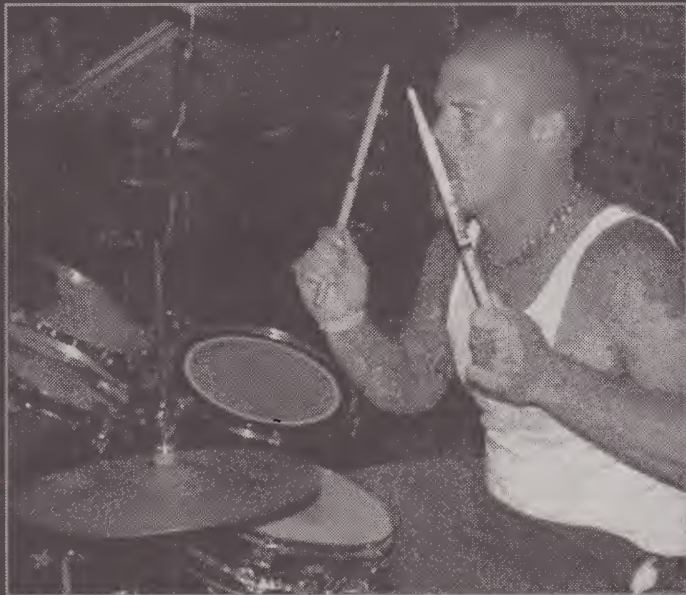
records ever. As far as Jeff goes, it didn't take much convincing. He was friends with Scott, who I had been talking about doing a band with for a while...and eventually all the pieces fit together. I used to run into Jeff randomly in Baltimore and get all geeked out about it...but he always used to treat me weird...it turned out he thought I was making fun of him. He had no idea I was dead serious when I told him I was listening to Breakdown for 8 hrs straight the weekend before. The chemistry in this band is perfect. I've never been a part of anything like it.

For the people who don't know anything about you, tell us what bands you all were in prior to Slumlords?

Well Jeff of course sang for Breakdown...and if you don't know them, stop what you are doing and get their 87 Demo CD on Blackout. Asides from Slumlords, Scotty also plays drums in Stout as well as The Royal Americans (which is Sab Grey from Iron Cross' country band). Dougie plays bass in Stout, and has done time in Next Step Up, 25 Ta Life and Comin' Correct. Right now, I'm also playing guitar in Bring It On and Wake Up Cold. I used to play with Day of Mourning, 25 Ta Life, Comin' Correct, XCoalition Against ShaneX. I still fill in for friend's bands whenever I'm needed and have the time. I'm also currently working on some short film scores and some side projects. We've all pretty much got our hands full.

What have you released so far and where can we find out more about you on the web?

We have a couple of demos out, the full length CD/LP, the 2003 Demo 7", and a few compilation appearances (including a German porno movie that no one seems interested in sending us copies of - I'm looking at you Bada). We just recorded for a new 7" that's coming out on Malfunction Records in the fall. We're constantly writing...me and Scotty are like a factory. We have a slew of 7" releases planned for



2005. You can check out www.SlumlordsEvictionCrew.com for all the latest info.

Who did the art for your CD and why did you choose them?

Jeff Beckman of Chokehold/Left For Dead/Haymaker fame did the album cover art. I really liked the covers he had drawn for No Warning, and was a big fan of all the bands he had been involved with over the years. He was always cool to me whenever Haymaker Crew used to show up to shows and throw fireworks at everyone. He even reimbursed me for a fire extinguisher he threw at the audience in an attempt to make it explode. He's a quality dude. As for the art, it took a really long time, but it was totally worth the wait. We definitely want to work with him again in the future. -Actually come to think of it, he's the only guy that ever taunted me about selling out-Canada. He's in the middle of producing a horror movie. You all need to check it out www.rabidogfilms.com

What type of beer are you guys drinking on the back cover of your CD? Weren't you edge at some point?

Oliver's Ale, brewed in house at the Wharf Rat in Baltimore. You show up, it's 3 beers for \$3 and everyone just has tables full of beer! It usually equates to a lot of mayhem, coordinating those pictures was a total nightmare! Scottie was all tanked, and he kept inviting all these random guys to be in our band and I had to distract them long enough to get the photos done...it was a zoo in there! What a pain in the ass that day was. We all partied a lot while growing up. Most of my teenage years are a blur as a result of that. I was sxe for a few years in my early 20s, and then I got bored of it. You know how the saying goes: 'If you're not now, you never were'. Looking back, it was an important part of my life, I learned how to balance life out, and learned how much one can accomplish when sober. After Day of Mourning was done, I was trying to figure out what

to do next. It got to the point where I would have done anything to forget that my girlfriend at the time was being a huge pain in the ass and eating all my food, that I hated my job...basically my life sucked. But in all truth that's not even what made me break it, it all came down to bad influences in the form of two words: Len Earthmover. Haha. Nowadays I enjoy having a few drinks with my friends once in a while, but for the most part I'm a clumsy, mumbling, in my own world disaster 24 hours a day without anything in my system.

Priest or Maiden?

Iron Maiden, because they had consecutively amazing albums throughout their career. Everything they did up to the Live After Death album was perfect. And even the albums after that had a few good songs here and there. To me though, their best stuff was when Paul Dianno and Clive Burr were in the band. Priest had a lot of good songs here and there, but didn't have the consistency that Maiden had overall. 'Screaming For Vengeance' ruled and 'Defenders of The Faith' is a total metal masterpiece, but other than those 2 albums, I only liked a few songs here and there. Give me a tape with Iron Maiden s/t on one side and Defenders on the other and I'd be happy.

Coke or Pepsi?

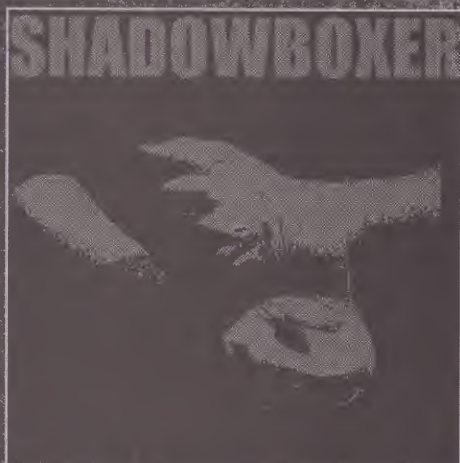
I hate soda.

Shout outs???

Baltimore/DC hardcore family. Tony Tidbits, Bring It On, Fighting Chance, Wake Up Cold, Stout, Dead End Boys, The Screws, Backhand, Scheduled Beating, Queen Anne's Revenge, Muddles, Charm City Saints, Never Enough, The Spark, Aftermath, 86 Mentality, Worn Thin, Taken By Force, In My Way, Sidebar, Reptilian Records, WMUC, Conform Skateboards, Pimp Padd 1304 (RIP) Perfect Victim, I Scream, Malfunction, Rocket Punch, Superhero and Jagermeister. Thanks Jamey. ☛

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Boys Night Out



Words by Ray Harkins / Photo by Tim Harmon

As we throw some last nails in the nu-metal coffin of the past and look forward to what is on the horizon, what do we have to look forward to? Band after band screaming and singing about lost love, a broken heart and how anguished their life is in general being raised in an upper class suburban setting? Thankfully for bands like Boys Night Out, I still have hope. Coming from the Great White North (aka Canada) they have made quick work of making their band known in a sea of bands. Having just released their full length "Make Yourself Sick," I had a chance to witness them live and sit Jeff (guitar) and Rob (guitar) down to prod them about why the heck their band is making waves so quickly while on tour with Catch 22 and Slick Shoes. Time will tell what musical trend will stand after the test of mainstream success will do but I do know one thing, Boys Night Out will still be having fun no matter which way you slice it.

The Southern Ontario hardcore scene has been a hotbed for hardcore over the past decade and even further back. What do you attribute this to if you can think of anything?

JEFF: To me it is a really tight knit scene where all of the bands support each other, there are also a decent amount of independent record labels in the area. It seems to be that all of the suburbs around Toronto

have their own little scenes and they just thrive off of one another. It's rad because a ton of kids attend shows, buy merch and just generally be supportive. I also see a ton of internet support pop up over time as well. Talent just seems to pour out of this area.

ROB: You can pretty much just do a tour of the suburbs leading up to Toronto like Burlington, Oakville and other cities are

short distances apart but different kids show up to each show.

Reading your guys lyrics, they often tread on the subject of girls and the fact that they should probably be dead. Have people been offended by the often masochist lyrics at all or has it been more of a tongue and cheek thing?

JEFF: More often than not it is just written off as a joke.

ROB: There was only one incident in Chicago where there was going to be a women's rights protest outside of our show due to the lyrical content but we smoothed things over with them.

JEFF: We just let them know that we were coming from a metaphorical point of view rather than literal because sometimes the message can be lost when word of mouth spreads. Besides that there have been a few other occasions on the internet with people wondering why we have to have lyrics of that nature but for the most part people take it at face value and just don't read into it that much. People into punk rock are usually smart kids so we figure that they can decipher that on their own.

Seeing as your sound can be at home with a hardcore show or a pop punk concert, where do you feel your place will be in the future.

JEFF: I would say that overall we have been having a lot of fun playing the more pop punk oriented crowd like a Drive Thru or a Fat Wreck band because they have a huge fan base of young kids that don't care about anything but the music and the bands playing. It is not like a fashion contest which sometimes the hardcore shows that we have played can get. These kids that go to pop punk shows just want to freak out and get sweaty. It is also very hit or miss with us when we play to the more hardcore crowd.

JEFF: It is really weird because we can do a tour like we are on now which is all over the map as far as band's sounds are concerned and then we can do the one we did with Saosin and The Bled. It is rad that we have the ability to do that in the first place.

What motivated you guys to take a part in one of the most random tour packages I have ever seen? (ed: Catch 22, Slick Shoes and Worthless United)

JEFF: It was just a matter of timing. We have our record coming out very shortly and we needed to be a part of a pretty large US tour and this one came our way. We figured with Catch 22's audience being generally supportive seeing as how Snapcase has done dates with them in the past, we figured that we could go over ok with their audience as well. It just all fell into place perfectly.

You guys got picked up relatively quickly to both One Day Savior and Ferret. What made you decide to go with One Day Savior before you went with Ferret on your full length?

JEFF: We actually recorded our first song demo first which we did not even send around to any labels or anything, it was basically to sell at our shows and stuff. Chris (ed: owner of One Day Savior) somehow got a copy of it and emailed us. We were unfamiliar at the time with what One Day Savior was up to but Chris was a rad guy so we said sure, why not? It was like two days after we got that email from Chris, he mentioned that his friend Carl (ed: Ferret Boss) was really into putting out our future records. It was awesome because we were able to have this deal secured where no one got screwed and we were allowed to work with multiple labels which many bands don't have the chance to do these days. We figured after we put out the EP we would announce that we signed to Ferret and release the full length under them.

ROB: Too bad the full length took forever! (laughter) I think two years.

JEFF: It was funny because I guess Carl's lawyer was going over some paperwork that they had and his lawyer mentioned us and if we were a new band on his label and Carl was like, "Nah, they have been signed for almost two years." And his lawyer was floored that we had not put out

a record yet! (laughter)

ROB: We are just a bunch of lazy Canadians!

Having the sound that is sparking the attention of many major labels and large independents alike, is this inundation of bands that sound similar a good thing or a bad thing?

ROB: I think a lot of bands are doing it poorly. (laughter)

JEFF: You just look at certain bands like The Used and in my opinion they are awesome. I get tons of shit for it but that record sounds good, the songs are written well even though it may not be them but who cares. It is a good thing in the sense that it gets the word out about this style of music and is a way for mainstream kids to be introduced to a subculture but it is also shitty because we when put out our record it will undoubtedly be said that we are cheap imitations of The Used and A Static Lullaby because that is what is out there rather than actually delving into what we are influenced by. It is bad in that sense because it narrows peoples focus on that style of music.

The one thing that amazed me about your band is the fact that shortly after your demo, kids were speaking about you across the country, I mean I even have your demo and I am from the opposite coast as you guys. Speculate on why kids latched onto what you were doing so quickly.

JEFF: First off you have our demo?

Yea, I got it from a Sky Came Falling show.

JEFF: Wow, that is pretty amazing since we only pressed 300 of those things and we were all burning them on our computers and stealing blank CD's from our friends! (laughter) It was a really weird thing to watch. That it obviously hard to tell coming from inside the band but maybe it was the horror styled movie lyrics that intrigued kids or it could be the fact that we are a happy medium between the kids that are into heavy stuff but nothing too screamy.

Name your dream tour.

ROB: Jets To Brazil or and Alkaline Trio tour would rule the world.

JEFF: From Autumn To Ashes are always fun on the road because we have done little things with them in the past. It would also be amazing to do a tour with Millencolin or NOFX because it would be fun as hell.

ROB: A fictional tour that I would put together would be Lifetime, Jawbreaker, Knapsack.

You realize you guys would have to open this tour right?

JEFF: No way man, fuck that! (laughter)

What do you see as the next musical trend?

ROB: (without hesitation) New wave or electronic music. We talk about this every few days. I mean look at The Postal

Service record, that is some good stuff. It goes in the whole 20 year rotation where you look at the 90's and randomly platform shoes got cool again? So the 80's will be this decades trend. You can even see it in the fashion styles with kids looking like they just got kicked out from A Flock Of Seagulls. (laughter)

Why is Lick's only in Canada? (ed note: For those not knowing what I am speaking of, it is the best veggie burger joint you will ever have, ever. Too bad it is only located on the East Coast of Canada)

JEFF: (laughter) Damn!!! I wish it was out here. Anytime we have to tell people what Lick's is in the US we all freak out and let them in on the secret.

ROB: That used to be the big hangout for hardcore kids until they started to sing with their orders because that got annoying. (laughter)

Name one book, movie and record that everyone should own.

JEFF: The book I would say Ishmael by Daniel Quinn. The record would be "Jersey's Best Dancers" by Lifetime and the movie would be Adaptation. I was gonna go with something old but that movie I love.

ROB: Jeff got me on the Daniel Quinn but I would say Perfume by Patrick Sarscan (totally misspelled this). The record is "Somewhere Between Heaven And Hell" by Social D and the movie is Taxi Driver because Robert DeNiro is tough as nails.

Friendster, a positive thing or a negative thing?

EVERYONE: Positive!

JEFF: I think we have about five or six friendster accounts because our manager keeps using it as a marketing tool so we can get more email addresses for our list. (laughter)

ROB: It sucks because I don't have a computer at home so when we go on tour I get to check it and get all excited to see if I have some testimonials, but I never do. (laughter)

Favorite serial killer and why.

ROB: I would have to say Dahmer because anyone who drills holes in peoples heads and hopes to turn them into a sex zombie is great in my book. Definitely a winning quality for human beings!

Give one piece of advice to the hardcore scene and how it can improve.

ROB: Taking the internet out of hardcore. Also, bring back baggy pants from the mid 90's.

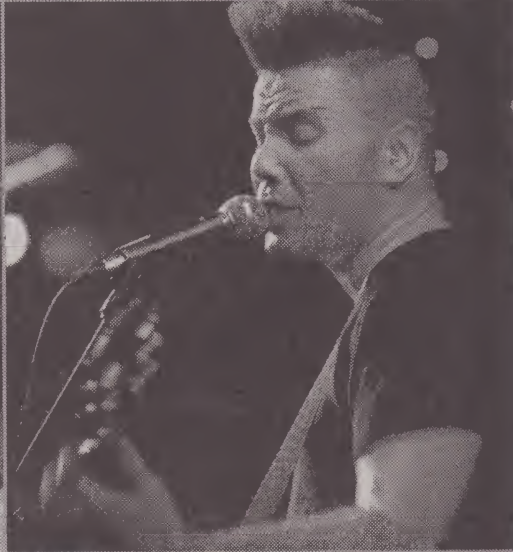
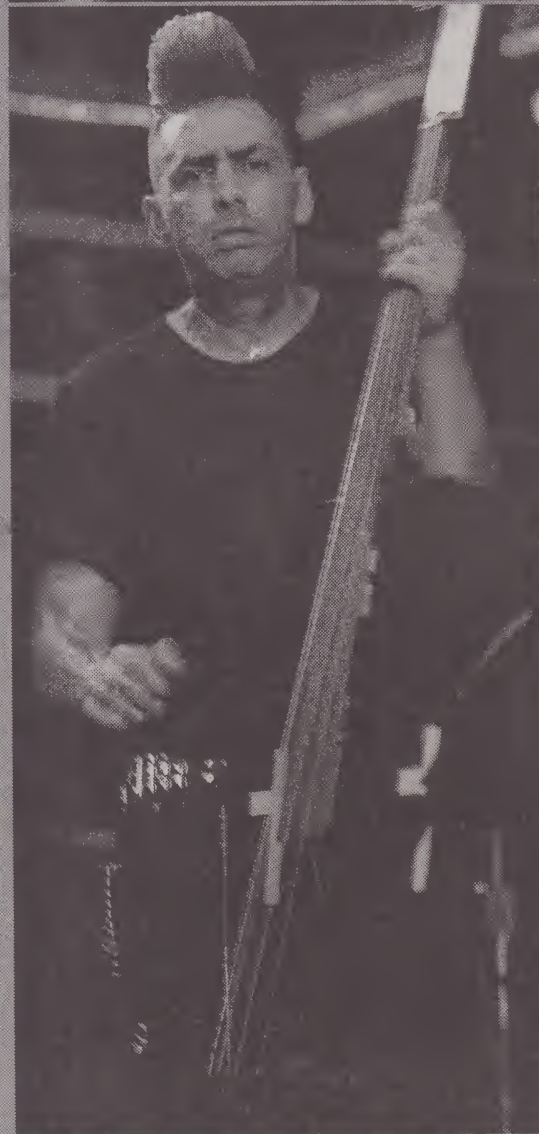
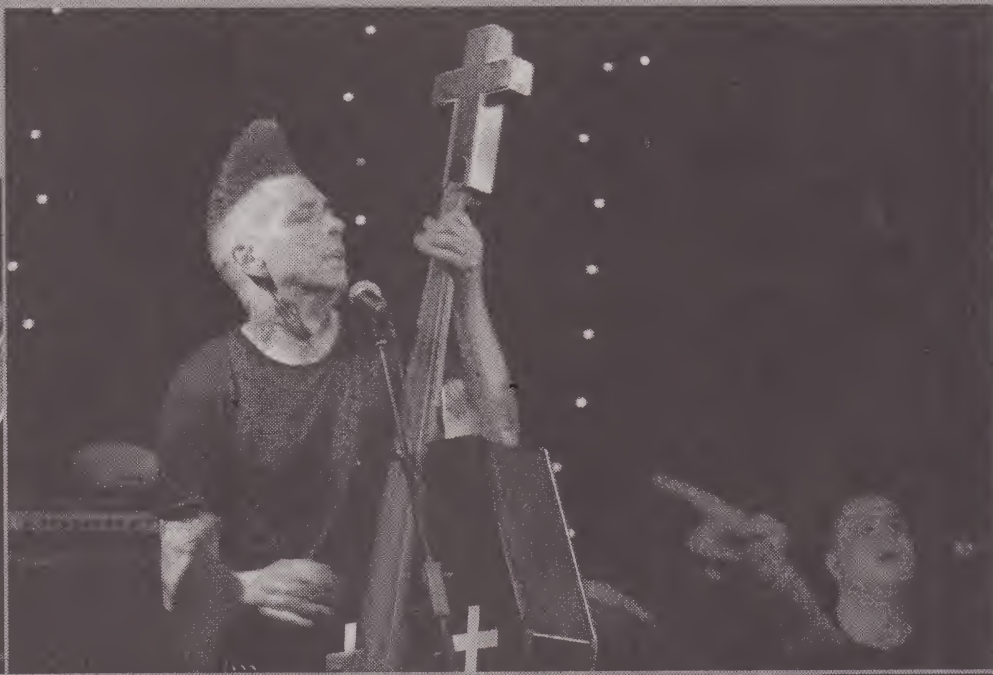
JEFF: And bandana's, beads around the neck with patches all over your backpack. That my friends will save hardcore.

ROB: Bring the edge back as well. (laughter)

JEFF: Yea, we were staying with this girl on tour and she saw our edge tattoo's and said "You are not edge anymore huh?" Which is true, but is still odd that things work out that way. (laughter) ☛



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STREET DOGS



By Dane Jackson / Photos by Raging Geek

Most of you should know the story by now. The Dropkick Murphys put out arguably one of the best modern punk albums with *Do or Die*. Then, after it came out and the band did some touring, lead singer Mike McColgan left the band to pursue his dream of becoming a fireman. Since then, DKM has gone on to find mounds of success, but not much has been said about Mike McColgan, until now that is. He's back with a new band and a new record. The band is Street Dogs and the album is *Savin Hill*. Yes, he's still a member of the Boston Fire Department, but now, it's safe to say he can attach his name to two of the best modern punk albums. Below is my interview with Mike McColgan, firefighter and lead singer of Street Dogs.

ARE YOU EXCITED ABOUT THIS BAND?

Yeah, I'm pumped on the band. I'm very excited. I just feel grateful that we got a crack at playing the music and making a record and being able to play live.

HOW HAVE THE REVIEWS BEEN SO FAR?

So far they've been really good. They've been a lot better than I expected. I think I was on truepunk.com and I seen a decent review of the album. I've seen a decent review of the album in a lot of the magazines. I'm happy. I'll take the good with the bad. It is what it is. It's our record. We gave our heart and soul with it, put our heart and soul into it. There it is. If someone likes it, they like it. If they don't, they don't.

Either way, I can live with it.

WHY DIDN'T YOU EXPECT GOOD REVIEWS?

Well, I expected good reviews, but the reviews have been better than I anticipated. They've been really, really good. I want there to be good reviews. But, on the same time, I'm a realistic person and I'm grounded. I've got my feet on the earth. Not everybody's going to like it. I kind of like to stay within the confines of reality when I think of things. So far, everything's been good. I anticipate there will be some people who don't like it. Either way, I'm fine with that. Of course I prefer good reviews though.

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH

WITH THIS RECORD?

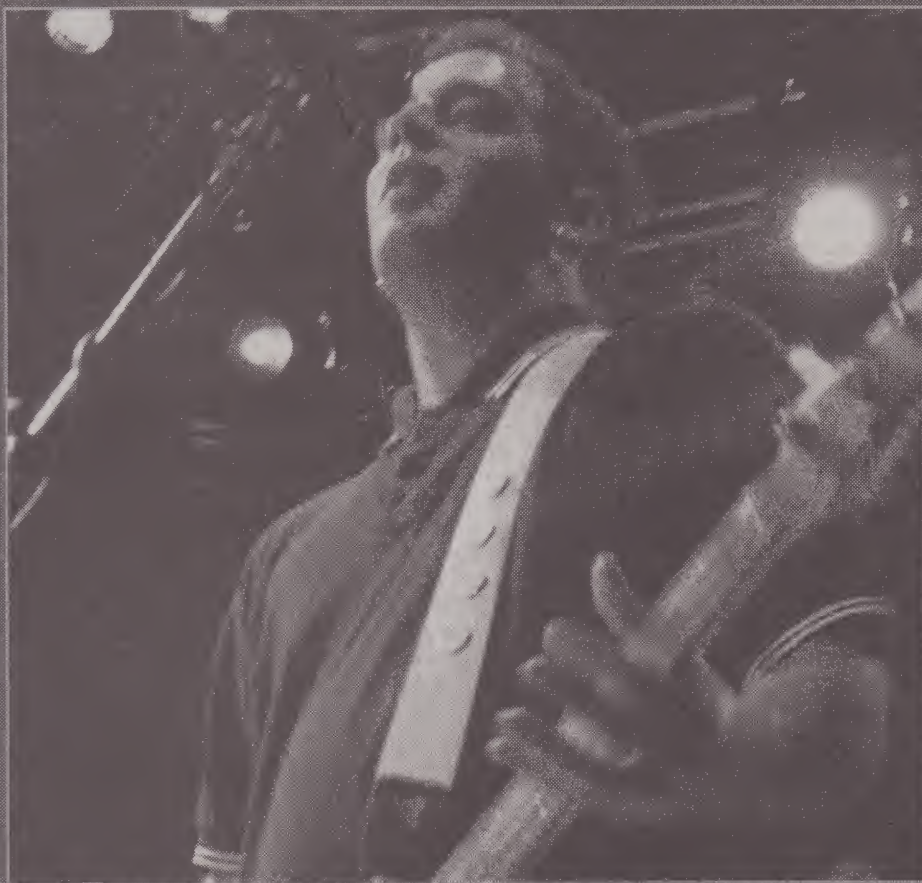
I hope to continue to play live when I can. To be able to make more records and to just have fun at it. That's pretty much the bottom line. If I'm not having fun while I'm doing it then there's really no sense being involved with it. Anytime I've made a record in the past or played it out live, I've had fun with it. This is just a continuation of that.

HOW WAS THE RECORDING PROCESS?

The recording process was really good. It was pretty intense. We had Nate Albert, who used to be the guitarist for the Mighty Mighty BossTones, as a producer, and Matthew Ellerd as an engineer. We did some pre-production with Nate for a couple of weeks, then rehearsed our stuff. He gave us tips. We took some, we didn't take some. We hemmed. We hawed. We exchanged opinions. When we went into the studio, it was a continuation of that. When we would lay down vocal tracks, guitar tracks, bass track, drum tracks, we kept throwing ideas off each other. Sometimes, it got contentious, other times it didn't. To have that fifth and sixth person on board to have an opinion outside the band is good. At least in my own opinion.

HOW DID YOU GET ALL THE GUEST STARS?

I just picked up the phone and asked Dicky (Bosstones) if he wanted to come down for



"Justifiable Fisticuffs" and he said sure. I called up Kenny and Al (*Dropkick Murphys*) for "Stand Up". It was really that simple. There was no ego or superstar shit involved. These guys are my friends. It was just that simple. I think that's just how it is in Boston. I can't speak to other scenes in that sense, that I can the Boston scene. It's really close-knit. If someone calls you down to help out, you help out.

SO, IF FOR EXAMPLE, THE LOST CITY ANGELS CALLED YOU, YOU'D GO HELP THEM?

What, to sing on their record? In a second! In a second I would. They actually came down and did some backgrounds on our record.

WHAT DOES EACH BAND MEMBER BRING TO YOUR GROUP?

Well, when you talk about Rob Guidotti, our guitar player, he brings a real aggressive and enthusiastic and powerful performance live. In the studio, he's intense and serious about his takes. He's serious about the songs he writes and co-writes. He's not going to pull any punches when it comes to opinions and where he stands. That's a good thing in the creative process. There's got to be a Yin and a Yang. Rob's really straight up. He's an intense personality and an intense guitar player. John Rioux, the bass player, is a seasoned bass player. A mover and a shaker in the whole punk rock community. He helps other bands out and he's involved with managing bands. He's really about playing to have fun and keeping it positive. That rubs off on everybody in the band. Then you talk about Jeff Erna on the drums. A consummate professional. Nothing shakes him up. He's a heavy, heavy, heave hitter. He proba-

bly hits harder than Tommy Lee. That's pretty much what everybody brings.

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

Let's see. My lame-ass; what do I bring? I think I bring my life experience. What I've always been able to do when I write lyrics and I sing, is to bring that across in an honest and real way. I'm trying to say this as humbly as I can. I don't want to sound like an egotistical asshole.

HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT DOING ANY OTHER KIND OF WRITING?

I've never like formally considered doing that. In the past, I've written stuff. I don't know if I'd call it poetry. I've written things outside of song structure. I wouldn't rule anything in and anything out. I guess if I was inspired enough to do poetry or to write in any other way, I suppose I would.

WHAT PART DID YOUR PARENTS PLAY IN HOW YOU ARE TODAY AS A PERSON?

My parents were always there for me. Anything I pretty much needed, I had. Schooling and food and shelter. They were always accepting. I could talk to them and everything. There was a level of them standing up for me and being there for me. They were loyal to me and my brother, like in the sense that they were parents because they wanted to be parents. It benefited me big time.

WHAT'S IT LIKE TO BE A FIREMAN?

It's great. It's good to help people out who are obviously in the midst of difficult times, be it medical difficulties, or motor vehicle accidents, or actual fires themselves. It's just like the cliché reads, it's good to help other people.

DO YOU THINK FIREFIGHTERS HAVE PUT IN A NEW LIGHT SINCE 9/11?

I think more attention is being given to something that firefighters have been doing since their very beginnings, and that's suppress fires, save people, and respond to very difficult and emergency situations. That was just an emergency of a grand scale not seen before in American history. It just really put what we do in the forefront. I think there is a new light put on it. I think people have a better idea of what we do because of what occurred that day and the devastation, horror, and pain that went down that day. We were thrown in the forefront. More focus was put on what we actually do.

AS A MUSICIAN AND AS A FIREFIGHTER, HOW DO YOU FEEL BEING LABELED AS A ROLE MODEL?

Not comfortable. I don't mind if people were inspired at a personal level by maybe something I wrote or maybe the job I do. But, to be looked at as a role model on how to conduct your life or how to live, I don't think I feel comfortable with that. But at the same time, I don't think I'd feel bad if I inspired someone or helped somebody out.

SO YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GO TO A SCHOOL AND PREACH FIRE SAFETY ANYTIME SOON?

It's not on my radar screen right now, but if I was asked to do it, I think I'd do it. I'm not actively seeking to be a role model, to be Mr. Hero.

ARE YOU THE ONLY PUNK GUY AT YOUR STATION?

No, there's actually another guy who used to live in California. JR, who's pretty punk rock. He knows about all the old school punk rock bands like The Germs, Dead Kennedys.

HE'S GOT YOUR BACK THEN, EH?

Oh absolutely. We were pumping iron the other day listening to Rancid, you know what I mean?

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE NEW RANCID ALBUM?

I love it. Where they're at always comes out on their records in their own personal lives and how they see the world. They do such a great job pulling that into song. You really feel that they mean what they say. They've always kept it true I think from their earliest beginnings. They are punk rock. I don't care what anybody says. I won't take any arguments on that.

DO YOU THINK THEY DESERVE ALL THE FLACK THEY'RE GETTING FOR THE WARNER BROTHERS DEAL?

No, I don't think so. There's always been an incredible amount of interest in them because they're good at what they do, not because they're flash of the moment. Rancid's here to stay. Rancid's been here to stay since the opening record they put out. They're a bonafide punk band with a lot of talent, a great sound, and a lot of power. Through all the waves and this or that, they've hung on and been true to their fans and true to themselves. It's just everybody's interested in Rancid. That's always how it's always been and that's how it always will be. They're not a band that's gonna go away.

WHERE DO YOU SEE THE PUNK SCENE



TODAY WITH THE POPULARITY OF COMMERCIAL POP PUNK AND EMO POP?

I kind of look at it this way. There are things that are called punk nowadays that I wouldn't deem punk. It's a new generation of kids. A lot of them haven't listened to the old stuff like me and you have. They need to go back and listen to the earlier punk records like Iggy and the Stooges, or The Ramones, or Stiff Little Fingers. Or go back to early Sex Pistols, or The Clash, or The Jam. If you're only 12 or 11 years old and you're getting hit with all these bands by MTV and they label them punk and you have no idea of what the stuff that came before it is, you're going to think it's punk. To each their own, but at the same time, punk rock has a level of aggression to it, a level of intensity, a level of power. Some of the stuff that's more poppy doesn't contain that.

ON THE ALBUM, YOU HAVE A ROCK SOUND AND A PUNK SOUND. DO YOU WANT TO BE PIGEON HOLED INTO PUNK MUSIC, OR DO YOU WANT TO JUST BE A BAND?

I like to be a band. I won't shy away from the punk word. I won't shy away from the rock word. But, there's dimples and dabbles of folk in there as well. I wouldn't want to be pigeon holed, but at the same time, if someone says it's a punk rock album, that's great. That's your interpretation of it. No two people are going to interpret things the same way.

HOW DO YOU INTERPRET IT?

It goes back to what Billy Joel said a long time ago. It's still rock and roll to me. You know what I mean? Punk this, emo that, hardcore that, death metal this, thrash that, at the end of the day, it's rock and roll. How each person feels about each band and each genre is their opinion.

WHAT MESSAGES DO YOU WANT TO GIVE TO YOUR FANS WITH THE MUSIC?

Stick to what you know and don't be afraid to stand up for what you believe in or stand up for yourself or where you're from. There's nothing wrong with working hard and being proud of where you're from. There's nothing wrong with doing the right thing.

WHAT'S IT LIKE GROWING UP IN BOSTON?

I might be a little biased because I've lived here all my life, but I believe personally it's arguably the most storied city in the United States of America. It's the first city in America that was organized. The nation was born here. There's a tremendous sense of history here. There's a tremendous sense of community in the various neighborhoods in Boston. Every particular area has its own little niche. It has its own fiber and bond. People know each other here. There's a tremendous sense of appreciation for sports, whether it be football, basketball, baseball, or hockey. There's a good music scene. It's just a great place to grow up. It's small if you compare it to Chicago, Los Angeles, or New York, but there's a lot to do. I call it the smallest little big city in the world. When you compare it to the other big cities, it's tiny, but there's a lot to do. It's a great place.

WITH ALL THE PROMO FOR THE NEW ALBUM, WHAT'S THE ONE QUESTION YOU'RE SICK OF ANSWERING?

I think the one thing that bugs me more than anything is people think that there was acrimony between myself and Dropkick Murphys when I left the band. Nothing could be further than the truth. I go to hockey games with Kenny and Matt. I still keep communication with Kenny. If there was acrimony with me and DKM, do you think Al and Kenny would have come down and sang on one of our songs? It's kind of frustrating when I see people buy into rumors. I mean people are going to do what people are going to do. You really can't control people from spouting off about what they think is real and what they think is the truth, but if you really look at things objectively and hard, you'll realize things between myself and the Dropkick Murphys, things are well. I'm happy for their success. And they're backing me being in Street Dogs and having a record and a band too.

WHAT BOSTON PUNK BANDS SHOULD THE REST OF AMERICA KNOW ABOUT?

I would keep an eye out for Dirty Water. That's Mark Lind's band. He used to be in the Ducky Boys. I'd keep an eye out for a Boston punk band called the Pug Uglies. I'd keep an eye out for The Marvels, The Dents, Suspect Device, there's a lot of good punk bands inside of Boston. The Explosions. A lot of good bands. The scene is re energized and there's a lot of up and coming bands. A lot of great shows. Good things are going on.

WHAT'S IT LIKE HAVING A SCENE REVITALIZED?

It's good. It's exciting. It's been a long time coming. Another generation is frustrated and angry. They've had enough of boy bands and pop culture. They want rock and roll. They want guitars. They want loudness and they want some angst, and they're gonna get it. That's basically what it is. People have had enough?

DO YOU SEE A DIVISION BETWEEN EAST COAST PUNK BANDS AND WEST COAST PUNK BANDS?

No, not at all. It's not even like comparable to the Bad Boy versus Death Row thing. I don't see any acrimony or animosity between any of the East and West bands. If there is any, I don't know about it.

WHAT ABOUT STYLISTICALLY?

Maybe environment can shape your sound and what you're saying and how you're delivering it. I can only speak from where I'm from. I can't speak from a West Coast angle because I don't reside in California. I don't live in Arizona or Nevada. I'm not flagging any of those places. I've been to all three and they're great places and offer lots to do and see. I can only speak from my own perspective. I can't turn around and try to categorize the West Coast and why it sounds like it sounds. I can only speak for what I'm doing.

WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN THE FUTURE?

I don't know. I think when we make a couple records and play a bunch of shows, and we do our thing, and my career progresses in the fire department. I think one of these days I'll throw everybody a curve ball and roam the earth and join the circus or something like that. That's a tough question. Today I see myself working for the Boston Fire Department, being in a band I love and believe in, writing good songs, playing good music, being able to perform live. I hope tomorrow is as good as today, that's all I can say. What the future holds is what the future holds. Expect the unexpected with life.

SPEAKING OF PERFORMING LIVE, WHAT CAN PEOPLE EXPECT?

They can expect anthems. They can expect punk influenced rock. They're going to hear the scream of the Marshall amplifiers. The crack of the drums. We're going to confront the crowd. When we get up there, we're not going to go through the motions. We're not going to be like, we're good, we'll do our set and do no interaction. There'll be interaction. I'll just see everybody at the barricade, you know what I mean?

ARE YOU APPROACHABLE AFTER THE SHOW?

Absolutely. See, that's the thing that bugs me the most. I hate when I see a kid looking at me like should we go up to him? I don't have a problem with that. I don't want people to look at me like a star. I want people to look at me like they can come up and say hey, that was a good show, or that was okay, or it sucked. You can come up to me. I'm not going to be like get out of here. I have my feet firmly on the ground. If I ever get like that, someone should smack me continuously, or hit me with a blunt instrument.

IF THE PEOPLE WHO READ THIS GET ONE THING OUT OF THIS INTERVIEW, WHAT DO YOU WANT THEM TO GET OUT OF IT?

That the Street Dogs are determined to put on a good show and sound as good as they can on record. We don't have an attitude. We just want to play music and we love playing. We hope other people like it too. What I want people to get out of the interview is give us a shot. If you like us, fine, if you don't, that's cool too. We don't bite. We're housebroken. We don't need rabies shots. We're not going to bark all night right next to your house in your backyard. And you won't have to call the dog catcher on us either. Give us a chance. ☐

RAPID FIRE

SHORT
INTERVIEWS
FOR SHORT
ATTENTION
SPANS

PROFILE: HOT CROSS

By Pee wee

NAME:

Billy

POSITION IN THE BAND:

Vocals

HOMETOWN:

Queens, NY

HOT CROSS SOUNDS LIKE:

A whirlwind of heat and coincidence.

OUR LABEL (LEVEL-PLANE) IS COOL BECAUSE:

Our drummer is the head of the label.

FOUR CD'S THAT ARE INFLUENCING ME THE MOST RIGHT NOW:

Neutral Milk Hotel - In The Aeroplane Over The Sea, Common - Resurrection, Mars Volta - Deloused In The Comatorium, Devendra Banhart - Rejoicing The Hands

BEST THING TO DO IN THE VAN IS:

Pick apart the Mars Volta record or Metallica's "St. Anger."

WORST DRIVING INCIDENT INVOLVED:

Being so tired that I hallucinated and thought I saw a tractor trailer across the road on the way home from Canada. It was a good thing I was not driving.

THE EAST COAST HAS INFLUENCED OUR MUSIC IN THE SENSE THAT:

We are not from one singular city, so we don't have to worry about

local trends.

THE KIDS THESE DAYS ARE:

Elitist, naive, uninformed.

SPORTS TEAM?

Angels.

NETS OR KNICKS?

Knicks. Gotta love the underdog.

LED ZEPPELIN OR BLACK

SABBATH?

Black Sabbath.

SHINY OR MATTE?

Matte.

UPCOMING TOURS OR RELEASES:

Tour of US with Suicide Note from 9/11 - 10/25. New EP "Fair Trades and Farewells" released on Level-Plane Records this past June.

WHEN WE'RE NOT ON TOUR WE EARN OUR LIVING BY:

I work in a tattoo shop. Casey works at a bookstore. Matt works at a coffee shop. Josh records bands. Greg's wife is a doctor.

FAVORITE THING ABOUT PLAYING SHOWS:

The contagious energy passed back and forth between band and audience.

BAND THAT STILL GIVES ME THE CHILLS WHEN I SEE THEM LIVE:

Fugazi. or Godspeed You Black Emperor!

WEB INFO:

www.level-plane.com/hotcross



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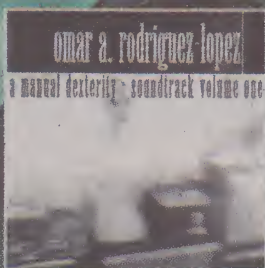


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TRUE NORTH

By Travis Fristoe

True North is still Dave, Mark, Matt & Ryan. They're good people and party responsibly and all live in beautiful Gainesville, Florida. The new album is called "Somewhat Similar," and is in fact somewhat similar to previous recordings. Interviewed by Travis Fristoe, this time at his house over coffee & a plate of vegan cookies. Matt & I were talking about Magic: the Gathering before the rest of the band got impatient...

Dave: Why are we still talking about Dungeons & Dragons?
Matt: It's cool because once you get older, no one can call you out on it. You don't give a fuck anymore.

Travis: (seeing the "NERRRD!" looks in everyone else's eyes) People can still call you out.

(much laughter)
Mark: See, you said that people can't call you out.
Matt: Alright, it doesn't impact you as much as when you're younger.

We cry on the inside now.

Dave: So what exactly is Magic: the Gathering?
Matt: It's nothing—it's a card game.
Dave: Is it like Pokemon?
Ryan: I've walked into those role-playing nights at the Books, Inc. café. I see all these guys guardedly sitting around and I think "what are they doing?" Then I realize...
Mark: Wednesday nights at Book Lovers. I never go to that place, but I love their Spanish Potatoes and sometimes Mariola will want to go there. So we go, and it's always on a Wed. night.

Maybe you should start playing...

Matt: We used to go there. (more laughter). But that was when it first started, and we knew Valerie would give us free food. There were just six of us, it wasn't like it is now.

Before we officially start, what is this interview for?

Matt: It's for AMP.

I thought this was for a high-brow European magazine! Alright, let's introduce ourselves.

Matt: Matt Sweeting. Member. Fantasy player. I've come out of the closet.

Mark: Mark Rodriguez. Guy. Just player.

Dave: Dave Diem. Happy to be aboard.

Ryan: Ryan Murphy. Me, too. Might as well.

Still looking for the vegan buffet.

Matt: I hear it's moved to Europe, though.

Which is why I'm going with y'all. So how long has True North been together?

Ryan: A long time.

Dave: '98?

Matt: No. '99.

Mark: I think it was '98.

Ryan: First show was '99.

Matt: I know we practiced at the Hardback.

Mark: December '98, I'm telling you. Because that's the year Palatka broke up.

Matt: The Hardback closed in January 1999. So year 5 next month.

Dave: Going in and out of periods of activity and non-activity.

Matt: It's a state of mind. Who am I?

Would you say you still play hardcore? And why do you still play?

Mark: Did you say why do we still play? Hmm...

Ryan: It's all we know how to play.

Mark: People ask me what kind of music we play and I can't describe it as hardcore, but I don't describe it as anything. I just say it's loud.

Dave: I hate answering that question. I just say, "Rock and roll. We write originals."

(more laughter)

Matt: Interesting.

Mark: Why do we play it? As a group we get along really well and play stuff that we like to play. It changes constantly. The stuff that we write now is totally different from a year ago or 2 years ago. To me, we keep playing because the sounds become fresh and new. We're not just beating a dead horse.
Dave: It stays relevant to our lives.

Ryan: I think it's just naturally what happens when the four of us play. It's not awkward—it flows, rather than saying we want to be a "dark" band.

Matt: I like hardcore. That's it. I wish we were faster.

Like Asshole Parade faster?

Matt: No...whatever.

Mark: But at practice you play so slow.

Matt: Music is music.

So the new recording, the new lp/cd, is called Somewhat Similar. What is it somewhat similar to?

(even more laughs)

Matt: I'll let Mark field this one.

Mark: What isn't it similar to?

Ryan: It's somewhat similar to most of our inside jokes.

Mark: We named it after that movie with Danny DeVito & Arnold Schwarzenegger. The one where they're brothers...

Ryan: Not the one where Arnold's pregnant.

Mark: No, they're brothers and don't know it. They meet up later in life...and are somewhat similar. A bad inside joke, basically.





So while we're on that sort of tip...do you want to explain what "JOJ or FOB?" means?

Matt: Yes. Are you "just off the jet" or "fresh off the boat"?

Uhh...

Matt: It's a reference from "North Shore." About kooks and haoles.

Ryan: It's about the mainland encroaching on Hawaii.

So you all are Hawaiian?

Matt: Yes. Yes we are. And everyone is encroaching on us.

So this segues nicely into "North Shore" or "Point Break?"

All of True North: Aww! Come on!

Matt: Not even a question!

Ryan: Although Anthony Kiedis is in Point Break, and that's cool as hell.

Dave: As well as Gary Busey in.

quite a fine role.

Mark: Busey is good, but he's no North Shore.

Dave: I give Point Break props.

Point Break has bank robberies and President masks!

Matt: It's just not in the same category. It's the same genre, but not the same caliber.

Mark: I think that when you jump out of an airplane and land on a surfboard...I don't know.

Dave: Mark finds it highly unrealistic. He likes his movies real.

So based on these type of lyrics, do people assume that you all surf?

Mark: I don't think anyone has ever asked us.

Ryan: Well, we tried to front. One time in particular, when we were in Michigan because we were asking if people surfed in the Great Lakes (big laffs). And

one guy said he did! We called him a liar.

Dave: He claimed it had great swells.

Ryan: He was a skimboarder, definitely.

Mark: In St. Augustine, has anyone ever questioned us about it?

Matt: They're always like, "You guys should come surf with us!"

Mark: Check out my wetsuit.

Dave: They'd see right through us.

Since the newer songs are bit more expansive, more epic maybe...I think Matt referred to one as a "smoke jam"...

Matt: Really? The songs just come out. They're all different. We just wrote a couple new ones that are really short-faster and different. When you have a song, you don't really know where it's going. It's not

like one person brings something finished to the table. Everybody chips in and whatever happens, happens. Sometimes the songs are longer. This album is longer than the other one, but there are three less songs on it. That's just how it shook out.

Since we're all Floridians here, do you think Bush will win in 2004?

[a warning to AMP readers: We're about to talk about politics for a while here, so if that turns you off, simply skim over those troublesome parts & wait for the '80s movie references to pick up again.]

Matt: I assume you mean George Dubya.

You can talk about our Governor Jeb Bush as well.

Matt: I think Jeb is going to step down in 2006 because he has his sights on bigger things. George W.— do I think he'll win? Realistically and unfortunately, yes. Do I want him to win? No. I just haven't seen a viable option yet. I don't buy John Kerry at all. No independent candidate has come out forcefully to do any damage. I know Nader was toying with running, but he's been waffling so long that he doesn't even have the support he had last time.

Sure, there's still that blame that the Green Party cost the election.

Dave: People don't want Nader to run.

Matt: The Nation came out and told him not to run.

The Nation, the magazine, you mean.

Matt: Yeah, and Nader blasted them saying, "I thought you were a forward, leftist thinking magazine, and here you are stifling my civil liberties." Which was an awkward moment, to tell you the truth.

Dave: I'll go on record as saying "Bush will lose." I'm going to throw as many positive vibes out there as possible. I'm just wishing it. I hate to be on that "anyone but Bush" train, but in these times... I don't mean to speak so gravely. I do think he'll fuck up and push it too far with budget proposals and Cheney's administrative style, Halliburton, the people who ousted that CIA agent. All of this is coming out. Bush's status in the National Guard is being questioned again. There's all sorts of things. Even though



he's got a gazillion dollars to campaign from and is about to unleash one of the most ruthless advertising campaigns ever... It's funny. You listen to conservative radio and for them to be 100% lame about things is childish. They cry like babies. Anytime anyone from the left (or the middle even) says anything remotely critical, there's this outrage at "Republican-hating" or "president-bashing."

Ryan: It's just name-calling.

Dave: Did you hear how Bush referred to the judges who ruled on the Massachusetts same-sex unions? He called them "activist judges!" Talking about activism like it's a bad thing. As if the people who wanted to keep the 10 Commandments in that Courthouse weren't activists. Please!

Matt: The thing that makes me nervous is that there's this huge groundswell that's not for anything. It's just against something. I wish that all this were leading to something. All the people that said they were going to vote for Nader chickened out at the last minute and voted for Gore. We need another option!

Travis: They didn't even get the 5 percent to qualify for election funding.

Matt: So here we are with all this anti-Bush feeling. And you would think that with all the people I hear say how much

they hate Bush and how they'd do anything to get him out... You would hope that we could create something new out of this. But we won't. We're so paranoid from last time that people are afraid to split the vote. That's what the Nation was saying.

Dave: I understand what you're saying, but that's a negative outlook.

Matt: It's not negative! I just want it to build... we can't have Bush for 4 more years. That's the end of it.

Dave: But to get him out of the way positions us for something more.

Matt: I'm just thinking that in 15 years, when Jeb's son is the first Hispanic president in United States History (which he will be). They're back, the same old. By then we could've had a viable third-party option. But we won't—it'll still be "anything but Bush." The 2 parties are so stagnant and similar. I just hope that this new wave of activism, the one centering around the WTO and protesting, takes root. Now that there are protests all over the nation and the world, it's exciting. People are being visible again. It'd be cool if it was working towards something too.

Dave: It is working! It is something!

Matt: But what is it working towards?

Dave: If nothing else, education. Leading towards change.

Matt: I don't see anything. The network is there, but...

Dave: What are you talking about? What do you propose we create?

Institutions? Candidates?

Matt: All of that. Going out and protesting is awesome. That's the grassroots.

Dave: Maybe these grassroots things will lead to something.

Matt: You saw this same groundswell 30 years ago and it led to nothing. Now is an exciting time, but will all the people who are super-active now end up like all the peace movement folks of the '60s & '70s who are now fat cats?

Dave: You gotta work with what you got.

Matt: But a longview would be nice.

Dave: Absolutely. That's why I voted for Nader last time.

Matt: There was such support for the Green Party last time.

Where the fuck are they now?

Dave: They're living in fear, just like everyone else.

But In Europe the Green Party is viable.

Matt: But Europe is totally different. In France, there's like 55 different parties. It's good & bad. The fucking runner up to Chirac (in France) was a right-wing extremist. A white power lunatic. You also have that problem: where there's so

many candidates that everyone votes for their friend and the idiot wins. The super-idiot that's like "White people only!"
Ryan: Arnold Schwarzenegger!

Based on the lyrics to "Summer Lovin'" how would each of you define "community" and "the other?"

Mark: Oh.

Dave: I'm going to defer that one to Murph.

Ryan: Umm, referring to "the other" is something that Kim brought up. The set of lyrics that Kim & I sing, we wrote together. We had an idea of what we wanted, and that for her was extremely personal. In that way the song is extremely personal. And I know that all of us, all of us in the band, have been through a lot of shit in the past year or two. I just wanted to be very expressive of that. The song has a lot to do with relationships, and I wanted to include her side, especially the feminine voice. Kim brought in another viewpoint. The word "community" as well. Since we've been going through a lot of things, you get a better idea of what's important to you, what's close to you, the things & people that support you. The ones that have been there for you and always will be there for you. There's death and life. Things come and go. Especially now that we're getting older and can perceive the pattern, the blueprint of things that stay consistent. We try to adhere to those things, those people and those ideas.

Dave: Somewhat similar ideas.

Matt, there's a line on the new album about "your place at the table."

Matt: That part of the song is about when people come together and you look at how they got to where they are. It's about miscommunication. I have every right to be here too. It's for people that talk down to you, condescend to you, for whatever reason, maybe to make themselves feel better. Maybe they don't feel comfortable with where they're coming from. "Your place at the table" is your right to be in the community, and involved with someone or anything—your job, your friends, your hobby.
Travis: I usually hear that phrase in reference to affirmative action policies...

Matt: It's loosely about a lot of things. At the time I was having conflict with someone about what is inherently right on an intimate level. There's the person that inherited something through birthright, and then the person that worked for it. And the attitude that's so different between the two. Obviously, it's different. With affirmative action, obviously I have innate rights because I'm a white male living in the United States and my family is Protestant. I had advantages, but everyone should have a right to step up to the table. And you shouldn't have anyone dictating who can come & go from the table. Sticking up for choice.

I was wondering what reaction you all had to the last 12" since it seemed pretty pointedly asking for response.

Matt: It didn't really get the response I expected. I thought with the title and the layout and some of the songs, I expected it to be more confrontational. That was my hope, anyway. Some of my friends were like, "Man, that's so cool" in reference to the art, but not "I'm thinking about social and interactive responsibility now." You're all at a bar: put your nightlife where your mouth is, all that kind of stuff. No one got it. Or if they did, they didn't care.

Dave: It was about dialogue, and more or less, romanticizing whatever.

Mark: "Oh, big label. This [record] bag sucks."

Ryan: I was waiting on a response, too. Waiting in a way that was more than, "Hey, you guys like to drink." We didn't even get shrugged off.

Matt: Just complaints about the bag.

Ryan: Laser disc!

Dave: We should have put them in Publix bags like a sack lunch.

I also wanted to ask about the line "we'll always be unglued and that's okay."

Ryan: "That's okay-ay-ay!"

Dave: That's a broad line. For me, personally, I've come to accept in the past few years that I can't be unsettled. How do I put this? In a way, I'm addressing our friends, too. I see so many people being active and doing amazing things. And whenever someone decides to go to a WTO protest, or

stay in Gainesville and work at a job they find agreeable morally & ethically, or someone decides to be a teacher or librarian... these are signs that someone is in disagreement with the shape of things. I think I'll die being unsettled. We're not going to see an end to things that we're uncomfortable with. And in our own small ways of opposing or going against, we're not going to see an end to that either. That's okay. That's fine. As an extension of that, I don't think bettering ourselves should ever have to end. It's not finite. That's probably pretty vague, but I don't see an end. Does that make sense?

Mark, how do you like singing?

Mark: On the record it wasn't a big deal. Its different live, very weird. I told them that I didn't want to play it in Gainesville because it's weird to come out from behind my drums. That part is just bass & vocals, so it's kind of like a spotlight thing. And to look out at people you know is very awkward. We played it a few times last week and it was actually pretty fun. I like what I'm saying & I like the part. I still hide in the back.

Matt: You'll grow to like it.

Mark: Eventually, I'll be pushing these guys aside and requesting the microphone again and again.

With the layout on the new cd, do the people pictured know they're part of your concept album?

Mark: No.

Matt: Some, yes.

Mark: I know my two choices don't know, and I wanted it that way.

Matt: The 2 people I chose don't know either. One of them sent me the picture, but I didn't tell him what it was for.

Mark: I know Mikey will recognize himself, but I don't know about Cody.

Matt: Or if he'll even see the record.

Mark: He'll see it!

Ryan: "Who are these guys? They're in a band? I thought they just hung out."

Matt: I have one more question. It's for Mark. Var & I were talking about how you've taken over the visual side of the band for the past 2 years.

Mark: Is that bad?

Matt: No, no. The question is...

Mark: The question is, "Do I want to get paid?" The answer is "Yes."



Matt: No, more like, "Do you have a vision?" It's getting to the point now where you see one of our records or flyers and you know what it is.

Mark: No. I just like hanging out and designing stuff. But it doesn't have to be a certain way. I did that Gunmoll stuff and it was different. I just try to match it to the music. Like if this song was a layout, how would it look? Or, us as a band. What we do and how we sound—this is how I see it.

Matt: Is there a program for that on the computer?

Mark: Yes. Yes, there is. When I sleep, I have these wires that touch my head while the cd plays. And whatever I see...

Matt: Real Genius!

Lawnmower Man!

Mark: I saw that movie on acid. Just so you guys know. Twice. But, if someone told me they liked the stuff I do and asked if I'd design something for them, then I'd have to take into account the people and the music.

Matt: So what's up with the baby snakes?

Mark: What isn't up with the baby snakes? It's just a good graphic.

Alright, that's pretty much it for the interview. Unless you want to mention something about the Europe tour.

Dave: We're playing Europe. Go.

Matt: Even though this magazine is sold in California. Go. Go to Germany.

After this interview True North

left for Europe for tour. When they returned they had a few memorable stories to tell. To make things short, they got robbed in Miami before leaving. The crooks took all their passports, some clothes, \$3,000 in merch and some specs. They broke down outside of London and missed two weeks of tour and got held up and interrogated at a boarder crossing. The rubber gloves were out and they kept asking them "How big is your sack?" Then Dave was held hostage by a hospital because he busted a bunch of blood vessels in his leg in a freak basketball accident and had to have an emergency operation to drain the crap from his fat leg. Without insurance or loot to pay for it I guess they thought having a strange little American fellow live in a hospital bed was better than letting him leave to go home. He was finally let free hours before leaving to return home. All and all though, they said it was a great time and they will be back in full form ready to tour the states this fall with friends The Blood Brothers and Against Me! They will also soon try to make it back to Europe again. This time they will stay far away from the curse of the Ponch.

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Sonic Salvation with Brother Wayne Kramer

By Jeff Alexander / Photos By William Nettles

"Telling the truth about what I observe in the world, or if I'm looking inward" appears to be Wayne Kramer's greatest challenge as a solo artist. The former guitarist for the sonically raucous and radical, left-wing band MC5 has been attempting to project his version of the truth for decades, and he has most certainly faced intense backlash. Detroit's MC5 made their mark as one of history's most profound bands to ever command a stage. Armed with fiery guitarist Fred 'Sonic' Smith and guided by activist John Sinclair, the MC5's reactionary politics clashed with the powers-that-be during the 1960's, the decade that politicized America. 1968's *Kick Out The Jams* is a white hot, live call to arms. Rock n' Roll suddenly became more dangerous and more confrontational as singer Rob Tyner screamed "Kick out the jams, motherfuckers!" which complimented the universal conviction of "By any means necessary!" shouted by activists who sought to change the course of America by exposing the corruption they felt had existed in all levels of government.

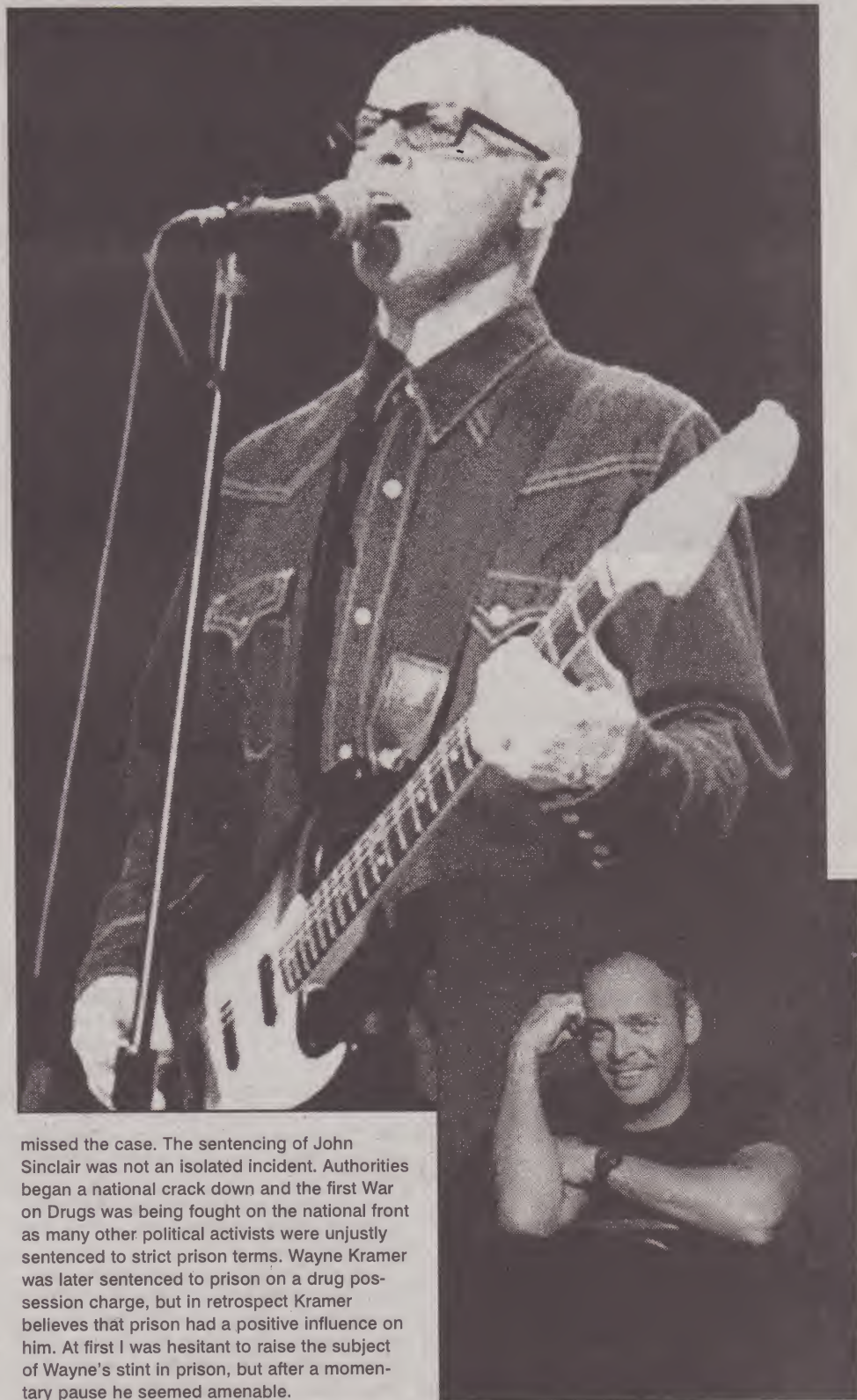
That same year Congress attached the H. Rap Brown Law to the Fair Housing Rights Act. The newly imposed statute made it illegal for any citizen to cross state lines with the intention of inciting a riot, giving the federal government the power and flexibility to declare national marches as 'riots'. To counter politically implemented policies that only served to dissolve the activist struggle, the MC5 founded the White Panther Party, an ultra left-wing organization that hoped to deliver the message of the Black Panthers to a broader audience.

"The Black Panthers had put out a call. We were young, we were frustrated. Things never move fast enough for youth. We really grabbed a hold to what the Black Panthers were saying, we idolized them for their courage and their fearlessness, and we identified with that. It was the best idea we could come up with (the organization of the White Panther Party). It was over the top, it was grandiose, and it was dangerous. The language we used was the language of guns, and that language is very dangerous because once you start using it, you can't predict what the outcome is gonna be," reflected Kramer.

For the MC5's manager, John Sinclair, the outcome resulted in a stint in federal prison.

Sinclair was infiltrated by an undercover police agent in Detroit, and capitalizing on America's increasing sentences for drug possession, forced Sinclair to serve an over zealous prison term for "dispensing and possessing two marijuana cigarettes." After serving two, long years behind bars, federal courts dis-

missed the case. The sentencing of John Sinclair was not an isolated incident. Authorities began a national crack down and the first War on Drugs was being fought on the national front as many other political activists were unjustly sentenced to strict prison terms. Wayne Kramer was later sentenced to prison on a drug possession charge, but in retrospect Kramer believes that prison had a positive influence on him. At first I was hesitant to raise the subject of Wayne's stint in prison, but after a momentary pause he seemed amenable.





"They were absolutely justified in locking me up," Kramer firmly stated. "I did anti-social acts. In fact, prison saved my ass. I don't believe I'd be talking to you today if I hadn't gone to prison. I'm that small percentage of guys prison had a positive effect on," he said laughing. At this point in his life, Kramer sounds more full-circle. He admits that he creates all his own crisis, and perhaps it is here that Kramer's growth as an individual continues.

Today, Wayne Kramer makes no pretenses. "As an artist, the main thing I can do is carry the news, the main message in the songs themselves." Kramer's newest record, *Adult World* revealed him proclaiming "I bought a knife to the gunfight," but Kramer's sharp insight remains as he proudly shared his belief that today's political climate is reminiscent of the decade that first spawned the rise of political activism. Without any reservation, Kramer stated, "I still give in to cynicism about how we got where we are. There's the obvious, surface parallel of the quagmire of Iraq and the quagmire of Vietnam, and a President who doesn't have the skill or the vision, emotionally or intellectually to handle the job that he has. Those two things connect to each other."

America's current position in Iraq begs the question of what are the true reasons motivating the Bush Administration to engage in war. History has proven that President Nixon knowingly deceived citizens as to the true nature surrounding America's involvement in Vietnam, as revealed in the controversial Pentagon Papers.

"The political system, the way its structured is

corrupt to the core, and these career politicians are in league with long standing, imperialist capitalist entities, who are the President's best friends. He's (President George W. Bush) a wealthy guy who grew up in an elite, oil dynasty, just like Osama Bin Laden! He's the same guy," joked Kramer.

Perhaps learning from the MC5's confrontational relationship with Elektra Records, Wayne Kramer has organized his own label, aptly titled *MuscleTone Records*. The confrontation with Elektra ensued back in the late 60's when the band took out a newspaper ad which proudly had them thumbing their noses at a chain record store, the ad featured Elektra's logo on the bottom. The stunt earned the MC5 nothing but corporate reprisal, but their image of a controversial rock band shone brightly.

Critics may bring Wayne Kramer to task by accusing him of joining the ranks of the business men, but Kramer defended himself by saying, "It's one thing to sit in your apartment with your Che poster and your red book (*Communist Manifesto*) and rail about 'The Man', but its another thing to go out in real life, roll your sleeves up and get mud on the uniform."

MuscleTone Records attempts to include a generation that Wayne believes is ignored, the 35-55 year olds.

"I'm not a teenager, I'm a middle aged man and my concerns aren't Britney Spears' concerns," scoffed Kramer. "People of my generation are universally ignored. The marketing machine of the music industry is aimed at 12-17 year olds. It's a curious phenomenon. By the

time you get to be 35, you're not buying it anymore! You have other interests, and this is the challenge we face as a label," says Kramer.

It's safe to believe that Wayne Kramer is making an effort to present artists that struggle to display sincere convictions that stray from the mainstream artists. It's frustrating to see orchestrated pop stars whitewash important issues and hoodwink music lovers into believing that major label acts are the only acts worth following. With individuals like Wayne Kramer struggling to present different ideas, we can safely state that music fans are at least offered a choice.

Today, Wayne Kramer's lyrical narratives are more structured around Folk when compared to his work in MC5, but his commitment to political activism remains just as strong, as he and *MuscleTone Records* traveled to Iowa on January 10th in support of Punkvoter.

Punkvoter is a political education organization founded by NOFX front man, Fat Mike. The organization hopes to get younger citizens involved in the electoral process. According to 2002 Zogby Exit Polling, Iowa's 18-29 year olds comprised of 18% of the general election vote. This statistic shows strong potential for a possible increase among younger voters once the November election arrives. Mr. Kramer also played at Blues on Grand Club in Des Moines on January 10th and participated in a press conference held at Hotel Fort in Des Moines on January 11th.

"It's in the songs where we all meet. It's the community center. If I listen to a song and I go 'yeah, I dig what he's saying!' and you listen to



that song, then we just met in that song," Kramer optimistically stated. Kramer may proclaim himself as a 'thorn', but his sincere belief that music can still bring a community together remains unquestioned. "Just because you play guitar doesn't mean you give up your citizenship," affirmed Kramer.

Kramer constantly reinforces the ideas of truth and change. Faced with the question of whether the 60's activist culture achieved a long impacting change, Kramer quickly answered, "The anti-war movement, the youth movement did stop the war in Vietnam. I think the evidence is in the effect political awareness had on the artists themselves. Today, there's a long list of politically aware artists, from Bruce Springsteen to Sarah McLachlan. Artists have a role in this (activism), they have something to do besides being an entertainer, which was the case before MC5. You were advised against talking about politics in your art. Post-MC5, if I can be so grandiose as to say the MC5 were the big bang in terms of political consciousness in modern recording artists, I think there was a great change. Can rock bands and music change the course of human events? I'm not so sure. There's a place that artists and art have, the deeper you go, the bigger the role becomes," concluded Kramer.

In the eyes of authorities the MC5 went too deep.

"We were followed, taped and harassed. But what it got the Black Panthers were death squads. Police departments became government death squads in every major city in America."

The FBI admitted to wiretapping telephones of the White Panther Party in Michigan. The FBI believed such practices were legal and necessary to uphold the image of an FBI agent "behind every mailbox." Then Attorney General Mitchell stated the government had "inherent power" to wiretap activist groups without a court order. Arguably, such practices violated a citizens right to privacy, and by the spring of 1971 Congress conducted a probing into FBI practices. Federal courts rejected Attorney General Mitchell's belief of "inherent power," stating that not one "written phrase in the Constitution" advocated such practices.

Kramer reiterated that John Sinclair ended up suffering by the hands of the government. Today, Wayne Kramer and John Sinclair maintain a close relationship. "He's one of my closest, dearest family members," Kramer happily stated.

John Sinclair is still active in the poetry circuit and was recently in Amsterdam and according to Kramer "Being the hardest working poet in show business."

As introspection continued, Kramer believed "I've changed. My commitment to the art of performance remains deep. When I was 19, I was kind of like a male go-go dancer. I was just up there to try and have as much sex with as many girls as possible. Today, I'm a married man and I have a beautiful wife, I'm not up there shaking my booty trying to get laid..." began Kramer.

"You can't anymore because you have to stay in place and sing, your microphone is like a chastity microphoner!" I joked. I suggested for his birthday that his wife should buy him a very

heavy microphone stand, to keep him in line. Much to Wayne's delight he continued with a hearty laugh. "I'm just coming from a slightly more performance oriented place. When I'm playing on the gig its all about being in that moment, in the music right then and there," finished Kramer.

Adult World highlights an artist who's growth is still continuing. "I like criticism, and I think its important for people to ask questions, I think its fundamental in the free exchange of ideas," added Kramer. Wayne Kramer's political convictions still exist, but he struggles to support them by offering listeners a constantly evolving, music foundation. Songs like "Nelson Algren Stopped By" are reminiscent of free Jazz, while the title track grooves along with the support of a funky bass line.

Wayne Kramer optimistically concluded, "I wanna leave the place a little nicer than I found it. If I'm not doing that, then all I'm doing is taking up valuable air."

Wayne's work in MC5 provided a much needed, fresh breath into rock n' roll. Today, he continues to grow and reach new heights, as an individual and an artist. However, Kramer and the surviving members of the MC5 are currently experiencing growing pains, as a legal fight has ensued over A True Testimonial, an MC5 documentary produced by Dave Thomas and Laurel Legler for Future/Now productions.

In an April 1st open letter penned by Wayne Kramer, he stated he began working with Future/Now productions in 1997. Mr. Kramer asserted that both parties agreed that he would be the music producer of the film, but the deci-



sion was reneged in 2001, when Kramer stated, "After much prodding, Dave and Laurel showed us 20 minutes of the film and it was clear that they had eliminated me from the music production work." Kramer continued, "They got what they wanted from me and kicked me to the curb without even a mention of our original agreement. I knew it was binding. I did business based upon it. I committed myself, and all my resources to the film. It was my work and it's the story of my youth. It's also my music. And apparently, it was my mistake in trusting them," wrote Kramer.

At that point in time, Kramer didn't halt the production of *A True Testimonial*, but attempted to resolve the conflict. Warner-Chappell, the publishing company of MC5's music granted Future/Now a festival-only license, which permitted the documentary to be screened at film festivals. The gratis license was good for one year, but expired in 2003. MC5 fans have stated on various message boards that they had in fact seen *A True Testimonial* in local movie theaters; one message was dated May 5th 2004. Kramer stated, "Future/Now Films continues to screen the unlicensed film in cities across the country for profit, making it, officially, a bootleg film." In addition to not securing the proper license to screen the film, Future/Now doesn't possess the proper music licenses for MC5's songs that are currently used in the documentary.

On behalf of Wayne Kramer and the surviving MC5 members, Michael Davis and Dennis Thompson Warner-Chappell has refused to grant a music license to Future/Now to have

authorization to use MC5's music in *A True Testimonial*. Warner-Chappell originally sent Future/Now a cease-and-desist letter.

To further complicate things, Rob Tyner's widow, Rebecca Derminer is involved in the legal fray, and Ms. Derminer is fervently against Wayne Kramer's decision to block the documentary. Rob Tyner was the MC5's passionate singer who passed away in 1991. It's very unfortunate that the MC5 are once again experiencing difficulties, and strangely ironic because the documentary in question attempts to dispel any disparities regarding the band's tumultuous history, as well as treating viewers to rare performance footage.

Kramer concluded his open letter with, "Sadly, my relationship with Rebecca Derminer and her family, that I have worked so hard to mend since Rob's death, has been utterly destroyed."

On the surface, it's easy to comment based on conjecture. One could easily believe that Kramer's fight is solely over money, but in fact, Mr. Kramer affirms he is struggling to protect the music of the MC5, and have Future/Now honor their original agreement. Kramer hadn't initiated any legal action against Future/Now from continuing to work on *A True Testimonial*, but within his letter Kramer said, "After years of restraint, I've had enough. We have waited a long time to work this out. We have been patient. They've had years to talk to me. I am not an unreasonable man. I was willing to talk right up to the day I was served with their motion to invade my personal life."

Kramer was referring to the re-opening of his


1999 bankruptcy case. Future/Now Films Inc. and Rebecca Derminer alleged that Kramer failed to disclose assets in his bankruptcy, among the assets being the contract with Future/Now Films Inc. for *A True Testimonial*. It has been stated that Future/Now Film Inc.'s lawyer allegedly informed Kramer that he would be denied participation in the film's "back-end" profits unless Kramer signed a waiver for Future/Now to use his image for the documentary. Mr. Kramer referred to this in his April 1st open letter, stating that the waiver was "egregious." Kramer wished to make a technical amendment to better clarify his Chapter 7 bankruptcy case. Chapter 7 bankruptcy is quite common, especially among consumer debtors. Typically, a debtor may keep the majority of his or her assets, while having most of the debts discharged. Discharge refers to a bankruptcy court order that releases a debtor from the legal obligation of having to repay all dischargeable debts, thus freeing the debtor from owing money to a creditor. Kramer stated to U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Erith Smith that he didn't want Future/Now to take unfair advantage and use the bankruptcy case as a means to settle the documentary dispute. It was confirmed by Wayne's manager, Margaret Saadi that Judge Smith upheld Wayne's belief, and Saadi posted this information on MuscleTone's message board on April 6th.

MC5's drummer, Dennis "Machine Gun" Thompson penned an open letter of his own, dated April 2nd. Thompson commented on the controversy by stating, "As far as controversy goes, the MC5 have been sorta like a relentless black hole, magnetically attracting trouble from every nook and cranny of the known media collective."

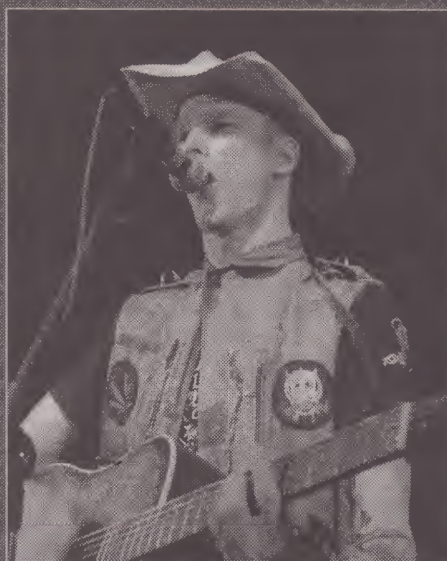
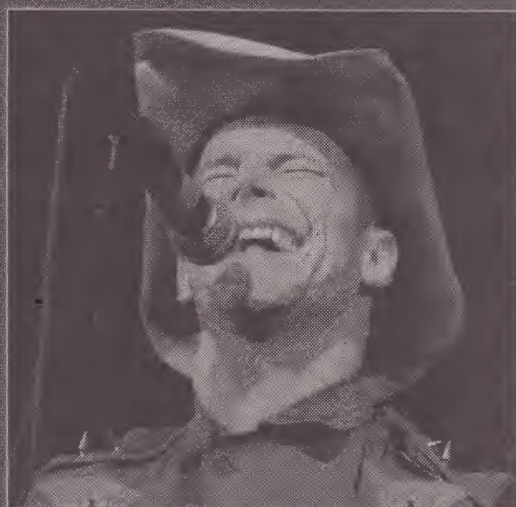
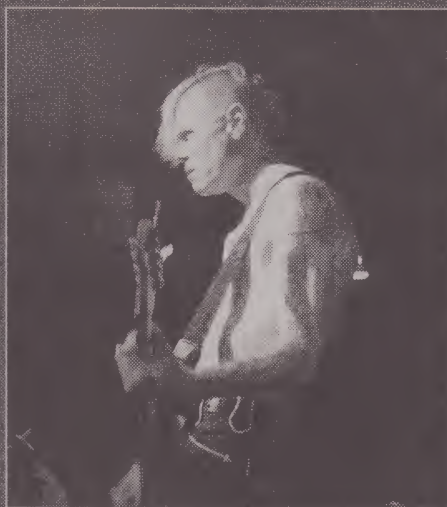
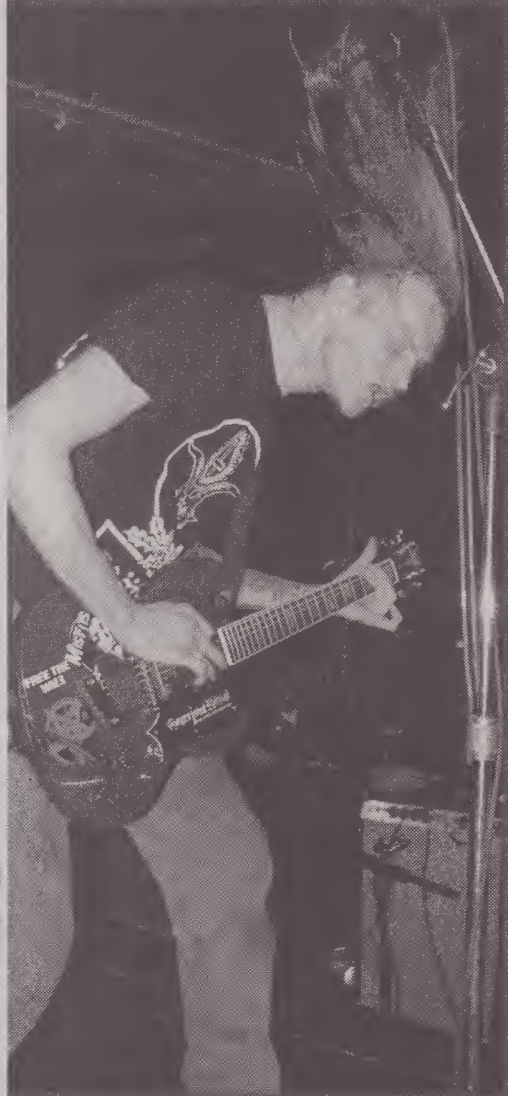
As true supporters of the MC5 and their message, we must show our solidarity for the music that has made such a difference. Kramer previously announced that he, Davis, and Thompson would be reuniting under the moniker DKT/MC5, to tour and share their passion with fans who were unable to experience the MC5 in their glorious heyday. Within Thompson's open letter, he affirmed "I am overjoyed to the point of tears at getting to play with my surviving friends celebrating the music of the MC5. You know I wish Rob and Fred were alive to be a part of this."

The surviving MC5 members plan on using a rotating cast of singers to handle lead vocals, Mudhoney's Mark Arm is among the lucky ones to contribute. We, as fans and friends are alive to be a part of this, despite the unfortunate difficulty and pain surrounding the legalities of *A True Testimonial*. The surviving members of the MC5 are mobilizing, to once again share their fiery music with a new generation of fans, and no four walls of any courtroom can tame them!

www.muscletonerecords.com
www.waynekramer.com
www.punkvoter.com

Wayne Kramer's and Dennis Thompson's open letter can be read at: www.dkt-mc5.com 

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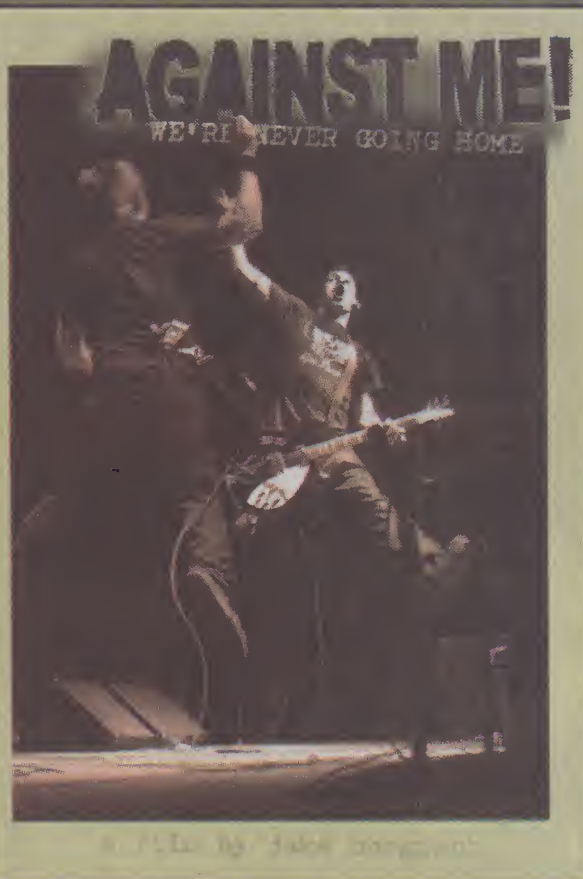
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AS I LAY DYING



Interview by Nick Dunn
Photos by Mark Coatsworth

SO, WHERE ARE YOU GUYS ORIGINALLY FROM?

All of us are from San Diego except our bass player who moved out from Texas.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A BAND?

Since 2001, so pretty soon, almost three years.

HOW DID YOU GET ON METAL BLADE? WERE YOU GETTING OFFERS FROM LABELS AND JUST PICKED THEM OUT OF THE BUNCH?

Well, we did a lot of touring two summers ago and when we got home from that, we built a name for ourselves and we decided to start sending out our new material and the labels that were interested were Metal Blade and a couple others. All those different deals and just developing relationships with the labels, Metal Blade turned out to be the best option for us.

HOW IS METAL BLADE'S DISTRIBUTION AND DO THEY DO A GOOD JOB AT GETTING YOUR NAME OUT THERE?

Yeah, they have the same distribution as record labels like Sony. So, the distribution is definitely good. They do what they can to promote the record. They aren't amazingly limited, but are somewhat limited on how much money they can spend, but they definitely put some investment into us.

METAL BLADE IS MOSTLY A METAL BASED LABEL. YOU GUYS SEEM TO STAY TRUE TO THE HARDCORE SOUND BUT ARE ALSO SORT OF ON THE METAL SIDE, WHAT WOULD YOU GUYS CONSIDER YOURSELVES?

I'd say where we grew up and where we come from, we're a hardcore band, but our sound is becoming more metal. So, metal core fits us. It's a popular growing term and it does fit us well.

HOW DID YOU GUYS GET HOOKED UP WITH THE HEADBANGERS BALL COMPILATION?

One of the guys that works for Roadrunner saw us at Hellfest and he really liked all of our stuff and wanted us on the comp. He just gave us a call and we were actually the last band he added to the comp and Roadrunner just put it all together.

SINCE YOU GUYS WERE FEATURED ON A MTV COMPILATION, DO YOU THINK THERE IS A VIDEO IN THE WORKS AT ALL THAT MIGHT BE PLAYED ON MTV?

Yeah, we actually have a video that has been playing on Headbangers Ball for the past two weeks. It's for 94 Hours which is the first song on our record. It's been on Headbangers Ball and it will be on Uranium also.

SO, WHAT OTHER BANDS INFLUENCED YOU GUYS?

All the bands that we grew up listening to, you know, different hardcore bands like Snapcase and Hatebreed. Pretty much just traditional hardcore bands, but lately, we've been getting into a lot of European metal. At The Gates and

even our tour mates Soilwork, so yeah.

WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN LISTENING TO LATELY? LIKE WHAT BANDS?

Well, the ones that we are on tour with and a lot of lighter stuff. My girlfriend got The Best of The Cranberries. I don't know, as a band, we kind of get sick of music being on tour so long so we play a lot of video games instead.

WHAT TYPE?

Oh, we just have the old school Nintendo. Mostly like Contra and Super Mario Brothers and that stuff.

HOW IS THE TOUR GOING SO FAR WITH BLEEDING THROUGH, SOILWORK AND CHIMAIRA?

It's going really good. This is the best tour we've been on so far. All the bands are getting a long and all the bands are really supporting each other.

WHAT TOWN DO YOU ENJOY PLAYING SHOWS AT THE MOST? WHAT TOWN HAVE YOU HAD THE MOST FUN AT ON TOUR?

Well, San Diego being our hometown is the best having your hometown crowd. We also have a great time in Long Island because the kids there go crazy. It's like as soon as we start playing, they lose their minds or something. There are also a few spots out of California, but definitely our hometown is the best.

AREN'T YOU GUYS GONNA BE BACK IN SF IN A MONTH FOR A STRICTLY CAL TOUR?

No, we are just doing three headlining dates in January. We are headlining in San Diego, Orange County and Salinas.

SO, HAS THEIR BEEN ANYTHING OUTRAGEOUSLY FUNNY HAPPEN ON TOUR SO FAR?

Well, on previous tours we've taken either dead animals we've found on the side of the road or we will buy a dead fish at a grocery store and we will throw it in the band's vans that we are touring with and stink it up real bad. One time we found a dead crow and put it in the band's air conditioning vent and it was blowing through the whole van and it smelled like carcass in there.

HAHA, DO YOU GUYS HAVE JOBS BACK AT HOME OR ARE YOU JUST STRICTLY BEING A BAND NOW?

Since June we've been making money doing this. We had to quit our jobs. That's why we stay on the road so much because this is all we got.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR THE BAND? WHAT'S COMING UP?

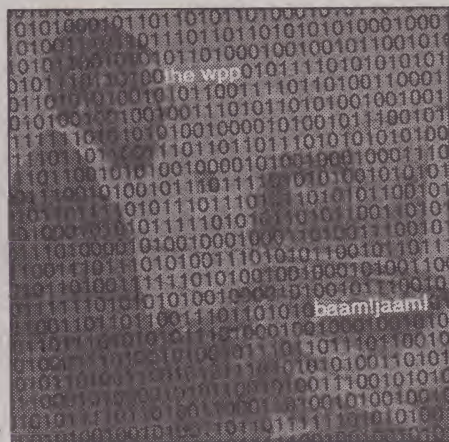
After this tour is over, we go on the road with Sworn Enemy, Himsa and With Honor. Then, after that we are gonna do a few more tours, then we are gonna write for the next upcoming album and record this coming fall.

"One time we found a dead crow and put it in the band's air conditioning vent and it was blowing through the whole van and it smelled like carcass in there."

Cool. Thanks for the interview. Anything else you have to say?

You know, we spend a lot of time on tour so it definitely means a lot when people come out and support us. Thanks a lot. ☺

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JOLIE HOLLAND

By Paul Saitowitz / Photography By Kate Kunath

Listening to Jolie Holland makes you feel cool. It's kind of like smoking or the first time you put down a scotch neat without grimacing. Her voice, smooth in timbre and seductive in delivery, hearkens back to an era of haunting mountain music and smoke-filled speakeasies, but it's still firmly planted on the cutting edge. Her crooning melodies combined with sparse – yet just lush enough – arrangements, sound like they come from way beyond her 28 years, or this century for that matter, but there is still a freshness and originality there that makes you feel like you haven't heard it before.

Holland was born in Texas, and although listening to her leads to romanticized fantasies of bare farmland steadily implanted in an environ-

ment resembling the dust bowls in "Grapes of Wrath," the suburban part of Houston she called home was filled with strip malls and other great icons

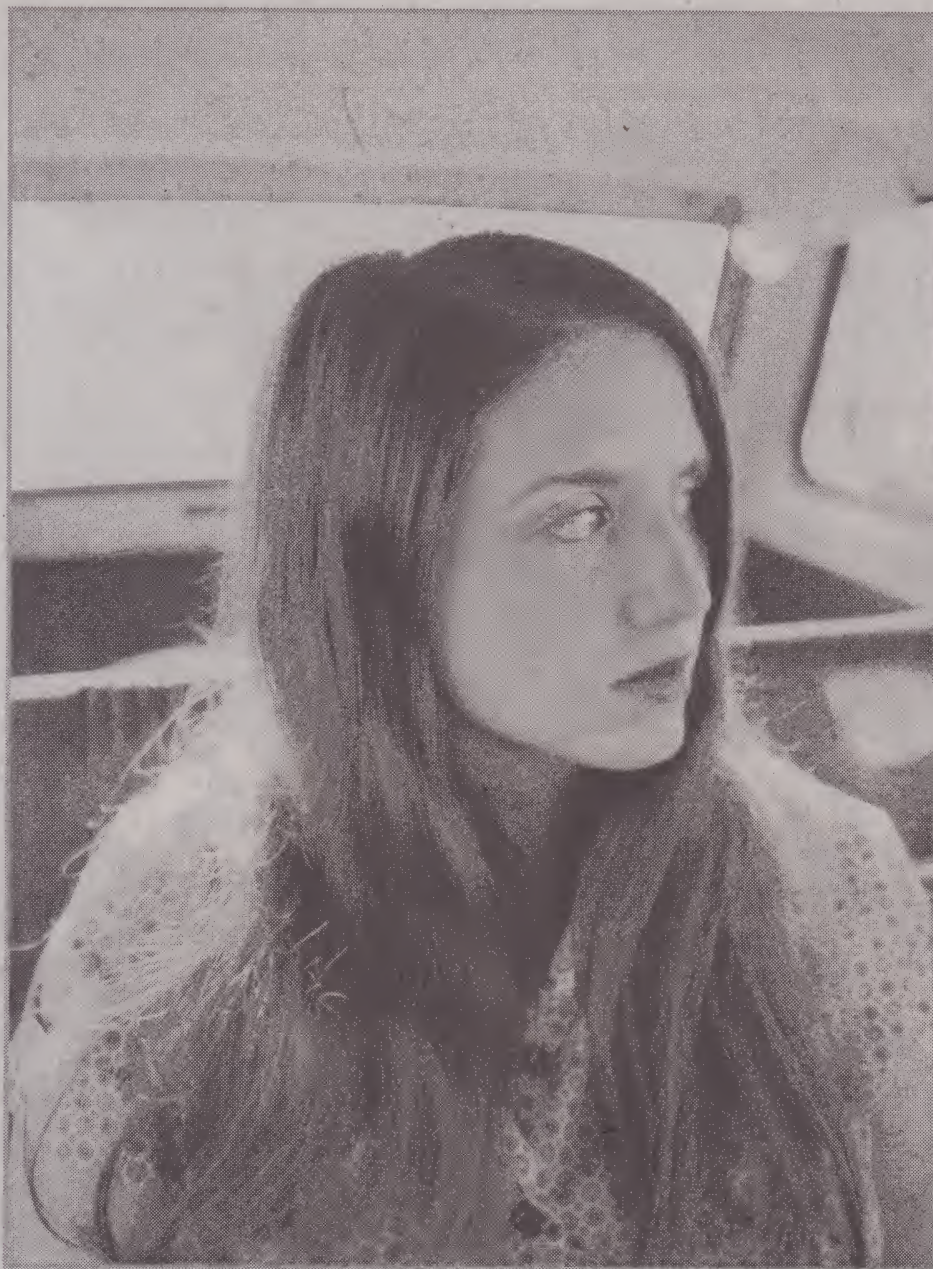
of suburbia like Wal-Mart and Home Depot.

"It was just a big, bland urban type of place," Holland said.

She began writing music as a child, and always hated the Nashville country schlock that littered the airwaves of the southern states.

"I grew up on stuff like the Pogues, the Cure and Elvis Costello, and my mom always played stuff like Zeppelin and Hendrix," she said. "I hated country, anyone with taste that grew up around there hated it. I didn't start getting into southern blues and roots music until I was older."

When she graduated from high school she was accepted to art



"I'm basically a bastard musician, I was never formerly taught how to play anything, I just kind of play what sounds good to me."

said. "I gave a bunch of my songs to a filmmaker friend of mine and told him to just put them together in the order he felt worked best. There is no master disc for that record... I was surprised at some of his choices, but it came out well."

"Catalpa," with its charmingly scary sound even garnered the attention of musical vagabond Tom Waits, who nominated the album for a Short List Award. The buzz over Holland continued to grow and her first proper studio album, "Escondida" was released in April.

The more polished, yet far-from-slick "Escondida" was co-produced by Holland over a four-day period just outside of San Francisco. The set is a bit more varied than before – more instrumentation – and runs the gamut from jazz, to country, to blues and folk.

"A lot of the recording was done on first takes... we were going for a very normal natural feel," she said.

Her voice on the first track, "Sasha" awakens the soul of Billie Holiday so much that it defies listeners to believe that this is coming from a white girl.

"Some of the songs were new, and others were written at the same time I wrote the stuff that went on 'Catalpa,'" she said.

Holland plays guitar, fiddle and piano on the album.

"I'm basically a bastard musician, I was never formerly taught how to play anything, I just kind of play what sounds good to me," she said.

What sounds good to her seems also to sound good to everyone else. Holland will be on the road throughout the year. ☛

school, but that was not to be in the cards.

"I knew that I wanted to concentrate on music and school just wasn't for me," she said. "I was always bored in school and anything that I wanted to learn I just learned by reading or doing things on my own."

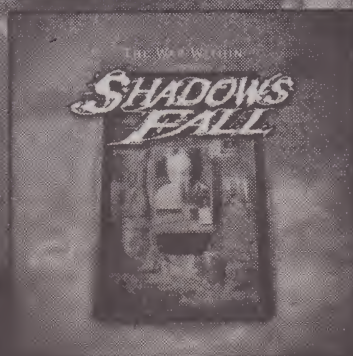
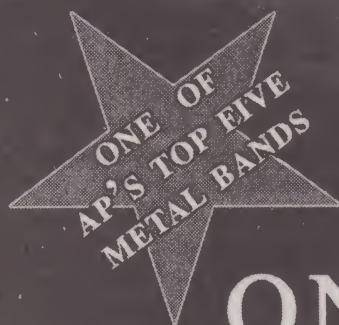
After leaving home Holland travelled with a group of musicians around New Orleans and Austin and eventually made her way up to Vancouver where she founded the Be Good Tanyas, and old-timey female group with somber melodies disguised in gorgeous harmonies. The band's debut album, "Blue Horse," was a

moderate success, but she set off on her own for San Francisco after its release.

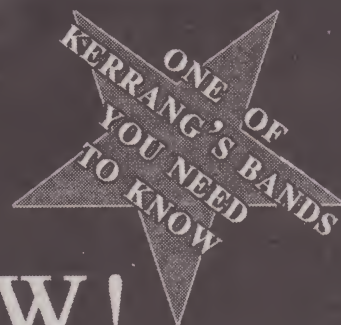
It was during that time that she recorded what would become her first album, "Catalpa," a spooky low-fi mix of various recordings she had done over a two year span. After selling it exclusively at shows around the Bay Area and on her website, punk stalwart label Epitaph picked it up for distribution on its more-eclectic Anti imprint.

"I recorded those songs using five different techniques and I never really planned on that collection of songs coming out in that form," Holland

"The War Within may in fact be the new standard by which all other
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LOGAN OF A FAITH CALLED CHAOS



By Kazy Brown

Could you tell us a brief history of how the band was formed?

We formed in the winter of 2002, our guitarist Austin and our drummer Zach had been in bands with each other for a few years. They formed a new band with some of their friends and they were looking for a singer so they put a "wanted" post on a local Dallas music site. I (Logan) found the ad and came calling. We hit it off. Fell into sticky man-love with one another and A Faith Called Chaos was born. The band practiced, played some shows, went through a myriad of member changes, and finally in January '03 we settled on a bass player named Joe. And he is greatness in man form. Then in April '03 we got a new guitarist named Dan. Dan is fun. Like moonlit strolls on the beach. Then a year later in '04 we added a keyboardist named Adam, and here we are one big happy family, like the Partridge

Family, but without the incest.

What do you hope to bring to the current music scene?

Some riffs that don't depend on "chugga chugga wee wee."

How did the name "A Faith Called Chaos" come to?

We are really into the movie "Pi."

If you could choose one song that spoke for the integrity of the band as a whole, what song would you choose?

Probably "We Woke Up a Fire," we like all the songs on the album but we really like that one.

What about playing the Warped Tour is most appealing?

Getting to play live is the reason we are in a band, so just getting to do that for two months, and being on a road trip with our friends is the best thing in the world.

Texas has been the stomping ground of some great music.

Are there any bands in the area that you specifically suggest people check out?

There are some great bands that we are lucky enough to be friends with Letter Twelve, Blood Ties, Kill The Client and A Dozen Furies are just a few.

Who do you hold in high regard as influencing you lyrically?

Really I'm more influenced by books and films than I am by bands. I read a lot, my interests lie in history and philosophy. All the lyrics for this album are really personal, but not all autobiographical. I write about people I know, about things I've seen and stuff that I know has happened. If some of the people in these songs were to read the lyrics they would instantly recognize that it was about them. Also if you have a similar taste in books as I do you will notice things in the lyrics.

What song of "A Faith Called Chaos" will appear on the upcoming Volcom compilation "The Only Constant is Change"?

Forgive Nothing which you can listen to on our purevolume page. (<http://decoymusic.com/www.purevolume.com/afaithcalled-chaos>)

If you could change one thing about the current state of music what would you change?

That everyone would stop singing about high school, you know there is something fucked up when a 25 year old is singing about prom. Get a fucking life.

What are your upcoming tour plans?

In the fall we will be playing some festivals and in the spring some touring, we also plan to re-record some of our older songs for a release on counterintelligence titled "Teeth Like Constellations" and in winter we will start working on our next album for our friends at Volcom. 2005 will see us everywhere a RV can go. ☘

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SHADOWS FALL



Photo By: J. Borucki

By Kirby Unrest

From their beginnings as a side project, to their present status of metal kings, Shadows Fall are coming up on a decade in existence, with a brand new full length, "The War Within," which many critics and fans are hailing as the best the finest Shadows Fall album yet. Filled with monster riffs, multi-layered vocal arrangements, massive amounts of groove and generally tunes that you'll have a damn hard time shaking from your memory. I recently had the distinct pleasure of speaking with guitarist/vocalist Matthew Bachand and here are his thoughts/feelings about their latest work, the Strhess tour, various political issues, "The New Wave of American Heavy Metal," Ozzfest, Ken Burns and the tragic death of a fan at an SH show...

So obviously you made it out of Vegas last night without losing the van and all your equipment. Any big wins at the tables? How was the show?

Vegas was absolutely incredible. Way beyond what we expected. Like 1200 people, sold out show. We've done well in Vegas before, but this was really amazing, especially since this a headlining tour for us. Definitely a nice surprise. I played a little bit on the tables, and I am up fifty bucks. (laughs)

How is the Strehess tour going?



Photo By: Anarchy Alicia (www.prettyandpunk.com)

you came to be in it, so could you talk a little about that?

Pretty much all of us were playing on local bands in the scene, and we got together and started in the summer of '96. Jon and I started playing together off some demos he had recorded, and I wasn't doing a metal band at the time, so it was a good opportunity to get back into it.

You are about to release your fourth full-length release, "The War Within." How do you feel it compares to your previous discs? Do you think it's your finest work yet or are you still eager to return to songwriting and try and top it?

I definitely think this is the best that we've done. The tones, the sounds, just the feel of the record is perfect. The songwriting was more mature, more of a rock and roll feel, but also has some of the heaviest parts we've ever done. I got to do more of my clean singing, it's always been in bits and pieces on previous records, but it was a focal point this time around. Brian really experimented around as well with his vocals.

How do you prepare and execute your often complex vocal arrangements?

It really depends on a lot of things. Vocals are always done last. We usually write the complete song and then turn it over to Brian.

What topics did you tackle lyrically this time around?

That's a really hard question for me to answer since Brian writes the lyrics. I will say though that we've always strayed away from "concept records", we don't like just dealing with one subject for a whole album. We definitely try not to be typical either. There are only so many songs you can write about Satan, eating a corpse, etc. That's never been our thing.

"The Art of Balance," scanned over 100,000 copies in less than two years, which I must offer congratulations on. Are you guys feeling any pressure this time around in terms of sales?

Not really. I'm pretty confident. What really eases my mind is seeing the results from this particular tour, when we



Photo By: Anarchy Alicia (www.prettyandpunk.com)

You got some solid up and coming acts on the bill including Remembering Never and Himsa. Did you personally select them for this venture?

The tour is going great, been really smooth. The package is great, the people are great, no complaints. We are all having a really good time. To

answer the second question, yeah we went into this tour and put the feelers out for what bands that we liked were available to go out with us on tour.

Shadows Fall has been around for quite a few years, but I'm sure there are those who don't know the origins of the band, and how

play the new material. Kids seem to be really excited about the new record. Though I am a little irritated by the fact that it's already been leaked on the Internet, six weeks from the release date. That's pretty annoying. There's nothing you can really do about that though. I'm not worried. If it surpasses "Art Of Balance", awesome, but if it doesn't, we know we wrote the best record we could at the time.

What are your feelings on the ever-expanding era of Internet file sharing? It's really hitting a lot of bands and labels hard in the pocketbook, especially in the extreme music scene where there is little to no mainstream support. There are very few bands that are really "crossing over," so every penny counts. At least that's my view.

Absolutely. I mean I am all for kids sharing a couple songs, saying "hey, check out this new band" and hopefully will buy the record and support the band. If you are really into the band, that's the way it should be. A band that sells 10 million records, like Linkin Park, file sharing isn't going to hurt them. When you're like us though, a band that sells 100k records, we need that money to feed ourselves, keep touring, and support our families.

Are you still running Lifeless Records?

Yeah, though not as much anymore. It's been really hard because I've got so much going on with the band. I pretty much just compilations once a year to help out the local bands, get them heard. That's the level it's at right now. I really don't have the time to sign and develop an act.

I'll preface my next question by stating that you are welcome to say as little or much as you'd like about it, yet I feel like many people who sincerely like to know your feelings on the fan that passed away at a recent Shadows Fall show. I have no doubts this must have been extremely sad and difficult for the band to confront, and something you are still coming to grips with. How have you dealt with this tragedy and what facts are available that you can share with our readers and anyone who shares your feelings

Photo By: Anarchy Alicia (www.prettyandpunk.com)



Photo By: Anarchy Alicia (www.prettyandpunk.com)



of grief on this loss?

Obviously, it was a terrible tragedy. I want people to know that it had nothing to do with violence in the pit or anything like that. He just passed out and never woke up. The band is still in a bit of a gray area about exactly what happened, so we really aren't sure on the exact cause. Regardless, it's a horrible thing to have happen, and there's really nothing else you can say about it. We sent flowers to the funeral and have tried to be as respectful and supportive

as we can to the family.

Why did Shadows Fall elect not participate in Ozzfest this year? Are you planning to do another Headbangers Ball or Take Action tour?

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Well, we wanted to have a little bit of separation from that, but more importantly, we weren't asked to be on it. It's understandable though; we played last year. I mean I wouldn't want to go and see the same bands every year. We'd definitely love to do another Headbangers Ball and/or Take Action tour. We had lots of fun on both of those runs. This band doesn't draw any limits, I can't say we'll never do this tour or that tour, because we've been really lucky since all our tour experiences have great.

The presidential election is fast approaching. What do you think of our current leader and his policies and who do you think should be between the two parties, or would you prefer a third choice if it was offered?

Lets put it this way; I am not a big politi-

cal guy, not really too into it. I do hate Bush though. (laughing) I tend to stick more towards the independent and Democratic side of things. Based on what I see in the news, that's what I feel is right, even though I am not really into politics.

The war in Iraq has been a really controversial issue over the year. Do you believe the actions taken were necessary and do you believe there was an alternative to aggressive measures?

It's one of those things that I am sure there is some cover up stuff, but at the same time, you never know anything for sure. Everyone has their own views and opinions, and that's part of the reason I don't get too involved in these sort of things. I mean regardless of what I think and if I get all upset about it, the government is still going to do what they

want. People put all these anti-war rallies together but it's not going to change what is going to happen. You cast your vote, you say your word and you get out because that's all you can really do.

What are your thoughts on the so-called "New Wave Of American Heavy Metal" tag that is attached to bands such as yourself, Unearth, God Forbid. Killswitch Engage and Chimaira? Do you feel it's an apt title or another way for which labels to make money putting some often very different sounding bands under one easily marketable banner?

A lot of people like to add all these sub-genres; I mean metal is metal. I don't know why they get the tag of new, at least the bands that you mentioned, since they've all been around forever. This band alone has been going for eight years. I guess since a lot of people are just discovering it, then I suppose it's new to them. That's the up side to the whole debate, it's cool to me. Whatever keeps them interested, I am all for it, though I've never felt like we need a label other than metal.

Many of the bands I listed in the previous query are groups from the New England area, your home turf. Any feelings on the scene there, and how its grown over the years? Particular faves from the new crop of NE bands?

Definitely. I love The Acacia Strain, All That Remains; so many more. All That Remains features our old singer Phil, they are great. There is quite a few, and the scene is really exploding. When I am not on the road, we all head down to Fat Cats and check out the show, see all the new locals. So many great unsigned acts just getting their feet wet.

Have you ever/read heard anything about Shadows Fall that really bothered you? Maybe something that was blatantly untrue and/or you felt was way out of line?

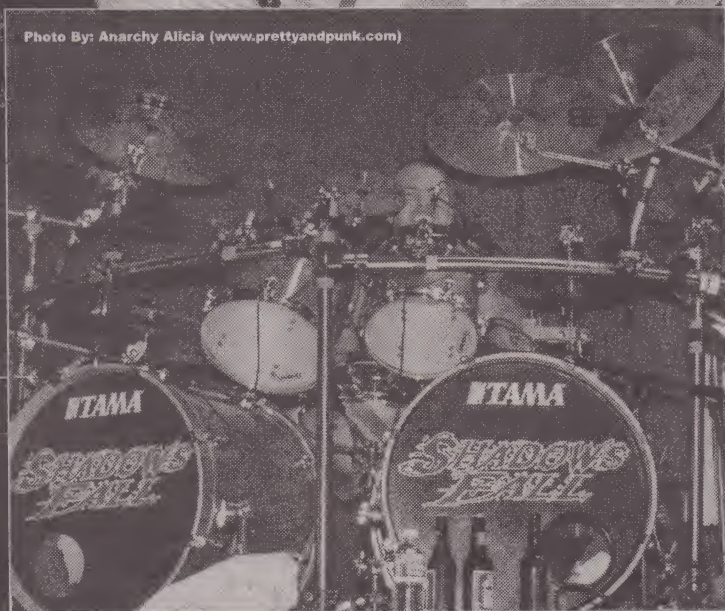
No, not really. To be honest, I don't pay attention to any of that shit. The bottom line is when you are dealing with the press, the reviewers, the journalists, you are getting one persons opinion and that's it.

How did your recent European tour go? Favorite and/or funny

Photo By: Anarchy Alicia (www.prettyandpunk.com)



Photo By: Anarchy Alicia (www.prettyandpunk.com)



memories from the trip?

(laughing) I wouldn't say funny memories, I would say fuzzy memories since I was drunk most of the time. It's always great to be out on the road with bands we've been playing with for years, especially in a place like Europe. It was a lot of fun.

You guys have shared the stage many diverse bands and in front of a variety of audiences, but seem to get a great reaction every time. What do you think is the key to your universal appeal?

I think the key is that we've played on so many different types of tours, with so many different kinds of bands. We don't draw a line with a group, saying like "oh, well they are not a metal band" or whatever. We never have done that.

Best and worst venue you have ever played at any point in your career?

Though it's closed down now, the worst venue ever was the Hanover House in CT. (laughs) Probably the worst venue

I've ever played period. The best one is the Norva in Norfolk, VA. So beautiful. They got dressing rooms, hot tubs, and they just take such great care of their bands.

Is there a film/book/album that has really moved you recently or at least thoroughly enjoyed?

That's an interesting question. I tend to watch the same stuff over and over again. (laughs) I wouldn't say a film per se, but I bring my DVD's on the road using my laptop, and I like a lot of history stuff, documentaries and the like. I like Ken Burns' "Civil War" box set, the entire A&E Biography series. It helps pass the time.

What is the greatest compliment you have been given by a fan/critic/friend/family member since you

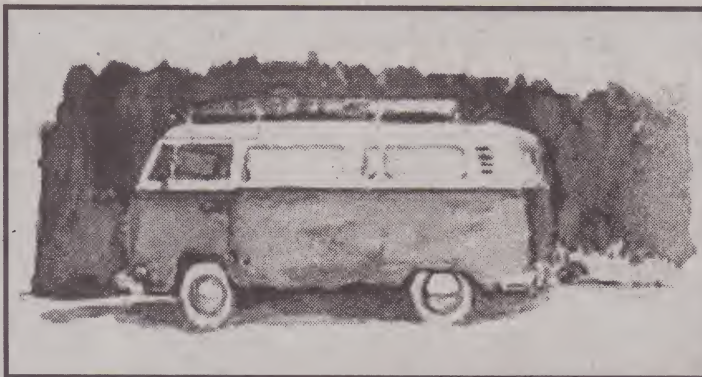
joined this band?

I can't say any specific comment, though getting the full endorsement from Zakk Wylde (Black Label Society, Ozzy Osbourne) was amazing. He called us "the future of metal" and that just meant so much coming from someone who is such a huge influence on our playing.

Shadows Fall has been called the "best kept secret in metal." Do you think of yourselves as that?

We've been around for 8 years, so I don't think we've really been hidden or anything! (laughs) People are now just starting to pay attention. We are out here to play music, and if people are digging at, no matter what point that got into us at, that's all that matters. ♪

BANDS AND THEIR VANS



AN INTERVIEW WITH DAN DASHER FROM IRRADIO

LET'S GET STARTED WITH SOME QUICK QUESTIONS BEFORE WE EXPLORE THE INNER-WORKINGS OF YOUR VAN.

NAME: Dan Dasher
BAND NAME: irradio
VAN NAME: Fidel Foucault The Punisher
MAKE: VW
MODEL: Euro Cruiser
YEAR: 1962

DOES THE BAND HAVE ANY INTERESTING MODIFICATIONS, I.E. LOFT, BIGGER ENGINE, DIAMOND WINDOWS, FANCY PAINT? DID YOU DO THEM?

Hell yes! We dropped a V8 up in this piece and mounted a big ass walrus on the hood for a hood ornament. We also lofted it so all 5 of us have our own bunks...no room for roadies. You will always know that it is irradio rolling into your town because we bought the van from a Cambodian delivery restaurant and it still has the advertisements and the Cambodian flag on both sides. It also smells like the food...mmmmm. We all pitched in to get Fidel Foucault The Punisher ready for the road. Edgar lofted the lofts because he is a master carpenter among other things. Paulo stole the walrus from the zoo, killed it, and stuffed it because he is a master thief, killer and taxidermist. Chad mounted it on the hood because he is REALLY GOOD at mounting stuff. And I dropped the big ass engine in because I was the only one who could pick it up. Collin is pist at all of us because he is the one who bought the damn thing...although he did add to the decorations on the inside. For some reason he loves bright purple. He also only wears really tight, really short, 80's style shorts. If you see him please ask him to stop! Anyhow, that is Fidel Foucault The Punisher.

WHERE DID YOU GET IT?

The freakin' Cambodian restaurant...remember?!?

IS THERE ANY HISTORY BEHIND THE VAN?

No! Why do you ask? Whatever was said is obviously a lie, although it was a part of the Mexican revolution at one time. The president that got overthrown escaped to Belize in Fidel. Ahh, what irony.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU HAD IT?

We have had Fidel for around 15 years now. He is working out very well except the Canucks at the boarder let us in. AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!

WHERE HAVE YOU TAKEN IT ON TOUR?



Man, Fidel has been all over the place. We took him to the United States...shhh, don't tell George Jr.

HOW MANY MILES HAVE YOU PUT ON IT?

I really don't know. The band won't let me drive ever because they say I suck at it. I actually faked sucking in the beginning and now I get way more sleep than the rest of those suckers. Hahaha. Is Hahaha. a sentence? Email dan@irradiomusic.com if you know. Thanks!

WHERE DO YOU PLAN ON TAKING IT (UPCOMING TOURS)?

Huh? What do you think I am?... a mind reader? We are on tour now. We are always on tour. Except when we are in San Diego of course.

IS THERE A DRIVER IN THE BAND, I.E. THE ONE WHO IS ALWAYS BEHIND THE WHEEL? WHO? WHY?

Not me! Hahaha. Again, see above. Um, well usually Collin because he is the Band Mom. We love you Band Mom! If it weren't for him we would just end up hanging around shitty rest areas trying to pick up middle-aged men...and never make it to any shows.

CAN/DO ALL OF YOU SLEEP IN THE VAN?

Yep. We do everything in Fidel. Everything!

ANY INTERESTING SLEEPING STORIES YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE, I.E. DREAMS, SEX, ETC.?

Lots of sex. Lots of dreams. Lots of other stuff as well. I like sex.

DO YOU OR ANYONE IN THE BAND DO THE MAINTENANCE? IF SO, TO WHAT EXTENT?

We have never had to do anything to Fidel. I guess that is a good thing because we would only be able to get parts from early 1950's American cars and Fidel is a 1960's German van. Impeach Bush and down with embargos!

TELL ME ABOUT THE WORST VAN RELATED HORROR STORY, I.E. FIRE, ACCIDENT, HIT A DEER, ETC.

One time I got in Fidel for tour and Richman from The Fucking Americans was up in that piece. It was cool though because they made it into a horror movie and we all got rich. Not Richman, rich.

DOES THE BAND HAVE ANY VAN RULES? IF SO, WHAT ARE THEY?

No way. Everything goes...except listening to music. We all fucking hate music!

ANY ADVICE FOR THOSE BANDS WHO DON'T HAVE A VAN AND ARE LOOKING TO BUY ONE?

Hahaha. Again, see above. Nananananana, we have a van and your band doesn't.

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR DREAM VAN?

We already got it, sweetheart!

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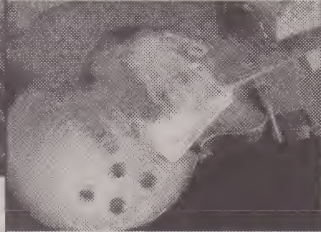
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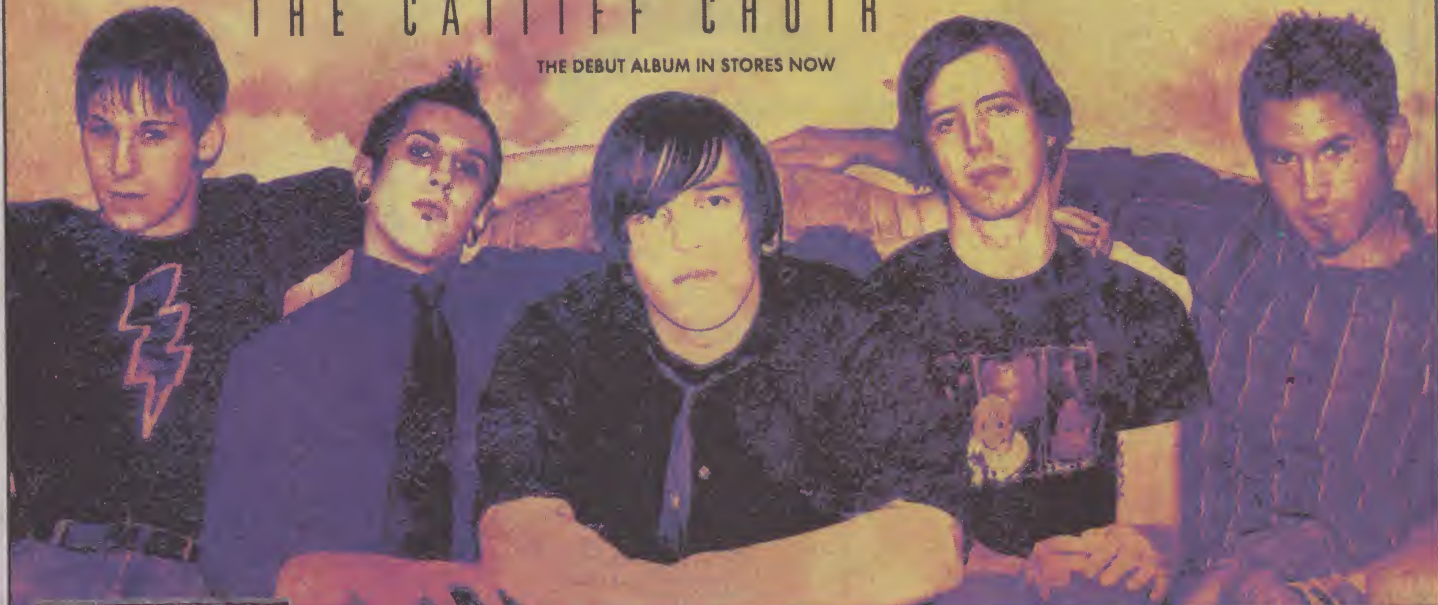
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Dulcie Younger's ROCKABILLY RIOT



ITS NOWHERE NEAR VALENTINE'S DAY, AND LOVE IS NOT IN THE AIR ANY MORE THAN USUAL. WHICH IS WHY ITS THE PERFECT TIME TO WRITE ABOUT...

ROCKABILLY SWEETHEARTS

EDDIE COCHRAN AND SHARON SHEELY

SHARON SHEELY WAS A YOUNG AND DETERMINED SONGWRITER. SHE STAGED AN AUTOMOBILE BREAKDOWN IN FRONT OF RICKY NELSON'S HOUSE IN ORDER TO CATCH HIS ATTENTION AND PITCH HIM A SONG. SHE LIED AND TOLD HIM THAT THE SONG HAD BEEN PUT ON HOLD BY ELVIS PRESLEY. NATURALLY, RICKY WANTED TO HEAR IT, AND HE WENT ON TO RECORD THE SHARON SHEELY HIT 'POOR LITTLE FOOL'. LATER, SHARON AND EDDIE COCHRAN STARTED DATING, AND CO-WROTE THE SONG 'SOMETHIN' ELSE'. SHARON WAS IN A TAXI WITH EDDIE AND GENE VINCENT IN ENGLAND WHEN A BLOWN-OUT TIRE CAUSED THE CAR TO CRASH. BY THAT TIME, SHARON AND EDDIE WERE ENGAGED TO BE MARRIED, BUT THE AUTO ACCIDENT SHE SURVIVED TRAGICALLY KILLED EDDIE AND INJURED GENE.

LOUIS PRIMA AND KEELY SMITH

SWING BEING KISSING COUSINS WITH ROCKABILLY, I DECIDED THIS WAS A COUPLE WORTH MENTIONING. LEGEND HAS IT THAT LOUIS PRIMA WAS ENJOYING A SOLO CAREER WHEN HE ASKED A WOMAN FROM THE AUDIENCE TO JOIN HIM ON STAGE. ONE GIRL, KEELY SMITH, CAUGHT HIS ATTENTION, AND LOUIS SWORE THERE WAS THAT OL' BLACK MAGIC BETWEEN THEM (ALTHOUGH YOU'D NEVER KNOW IT FROM KEELY'S DEADPAN EXPRESSION) THE COUPLE TOURED AND RECORDED TOGETHER UNTIL A BITTER DIVORCE CAUSED LOUIS TO FIND ANOTHER HONEY TO SWING THINGS AROUND WITH HIM. KEELY PERFORMS SOLO TO THIS DAY.

ELVIS AND... WELL... JUST ABOUT EVERYBODY...

I MEAN, LET'S FACE IT... ELVIS GOT AROUND EVEN MORE THAN I DO (DID I JUST SAY THAT OUT LOUD?) ELVIS PRESLEY AND WANDA JACKSON, ELVIS PRESLEY AND ANN MARGRET, EVEN ELVIS PRESLEY AND 1950'S STRIP QUEEN TEMPEST STORM. NO WONDER HE WAS ALL SHOOK UP!

Photograph of Dulcie copyright 2003, Dulcie Younger. Taken from original photograph by Danielle Bedies at www.whiterabbitstudio.com. If you have artwork, photographs, music, or information suitable for "Dulcie Younger's Rockabilly Riot", please send an e-mail with NO ATTACHMENTS to dulcieyounger@yahoo.com. Do it right! (and no heavy breathing)! Don't make me smack ya!

JOHNNY CASH AND JUNE CARTER

BOTH JOHNNY CASH AND JUNE CARTER WERE COUNTRY PERFORMERS AT THE GRAN OLE OPRY WHEN THEY MET FOR THE FIRST TIME BACKSTAGE. JOHNNY WAS MARRIED AT THE TIME, BUT THE TWO STARTED A MUSICAL DUO AND AFTER HIS DIVORCE, JOHNNY PROPOSED TO JUNE ON STAGE IN THE MIDDLE OF THEIR PERFORMANCE. THEIR LOVE WAS APPARENT TO ALL WHO MET THEM, AND THEIR ROMANCE READ LIKE A FAIRYTALE.

BOB STARR AND LUCILLE SAVOIE

LUCILLE SAVOIE WAS IN ATTENDANCE AT A WEDDING THAT FEATURED BOB STARR'S BAND. A WEDDING OF THEIR OWN FOLLOWED SOON AFTERWARD AND BOB AND LUCILLE STARR BECAME ONE OF ROCKABILLY'S FAVORITE COUPLES (THEY WERE ALSO KNOWN AS THE CANADIAN SWEETHEARTS).

CARI LEE AND STEVE MERRITT ARE MODERN ROCKABILLY LOVEBIRDS

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ON ANOTHER NOTE

"Thee Merry Widows", an all-girl psychobilly band (how cool is that????!!) from San Francisco, sent me a copy of their brand-new 4-song CD, which I

hear is available at Amoeba Records and by sending \$8 to Pine Box

Productions/1388 Height St., #115/ San Francisco, CA 94117. These

gorgeous gals on the cover and crazy-wierd cool psychobilly songs about "Grave Robbers from Outer Space" and "The Curse" combined with Miss Eva Von Slut's

domineering vocals and a band that isn't just "really good for a bunch of girls" but "really good, period"

make this a fantastic add to any psychobilly collection. I've

gotta see these girls live, so Eva ---- I'm gonna look you

up on my next trip to San Fran!

THE

Dulcie Younger
AND THE SILENCERS

DEBUT ALBUM

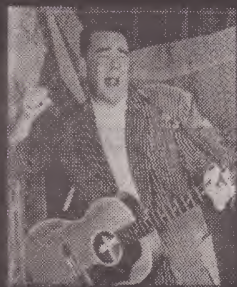
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HELLLOOOO....BABY!



I recently rekindled an old flame with The Big Bopper.

JP Richardson had the kind of deep strong powerful voice that can make a girl lose control over herself. He invented and perfected a singing and songwriting style which was mature yet goofy and down-right dirty at times. His lyrics were reminiscent of novelty records, but his topics were relatable to any nervous fellow just trying to con his way into a girl's pants.

Then there was his ballads. "The Clock", a song about watching time creep by without word from his baby, is a masterpiece written to the sound of a ticking drumbeat. My favorite song, "Someone Is Watching Over You" is a heartfelt ballad, simple and spiritual as a Hank Williams tune, but with a warm vocal that blankets the listener like a personally-sung lullaby.

In 1957, JP Richardson (The Big Bopper) cut his first single, and in 1958, his most popular song "Chantilly Lace" was the third most-played song of the year. The Big Bopper went from being a DJ at a local radio station to touring all over the world. In 1959, he died tragically in a plane crash with Buddy Holly and Ritchie Valens eight minutes after take-off in poor weather conditions.



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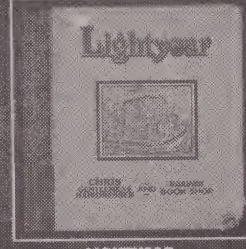
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"The Foamers" CD



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TERROR

AN INTERVIEW
WITH SCOTT VOGEL

By Stefani Ricci

Gaining respect in the hardcore community is definitely not an easy task for any band. However the feat of actually maintaining what you've rightfully earned is where the true challenge lies. In just a few short years, LA's hardcore brutes, Terror, have managed to prove that heart, honesty and integrity still exist among the scene today. A scene that many feel is being watered down and commercialized with imposters. Earning one of the most revered reputations while living to the confines of the road, Terror has managed to exude the very definition of what hard work is all about. With a new album, "One With The Underdogs," set to be released in August and transitioning to metalcore based Trustkill Records; this band is taking their music to the next level. An incredibly ferocious, tough as nails live delivery, combined with sincere uplifting messages of hope, Terror is bound to either leave an impression in your head or on your face.

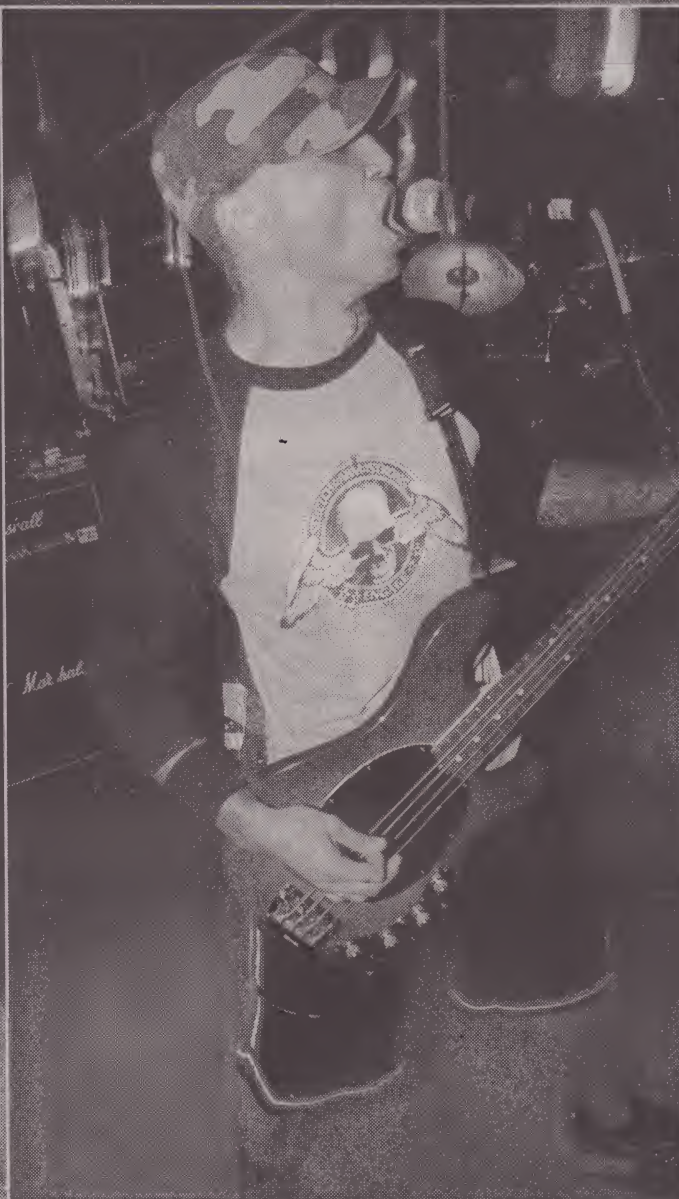
With your new record, "One With The Underdogs," what can Terror fans expect, what does this record shed light on, more importantly what does this record convey that "Lowest of The Low" didn't get the chance to?

What you can expect is Terror, but to the next level. I think that we just kind of stepped everything up a notch. It's still really fast, aggressive and angry. It's still the same formula, but I just think we did it better. It's more aggressive, harder breakdowns, the lyrics are better, even the song writing. We were really happy with our last record; we didn't want to change anything. We just wanted to take that formula and make the best of it. The whole theme of the record "One With The Underdogs," is that all the members of Terror, (and Terror as a group) is that we are just like everyone else in the hardcore scene. People that I surround myself with are people who are lost, who are struggling, people who are just trying to survive. So we stand as one with the all the underdogs and together with the hardcore scene we've found a place where we can overcome all the bullshit and stuff in society that we're trying to get away from. If you find the right people

and surround yourself with beautiful things then together, you can overcome and defeat.

Freddy (Madball) and Jamie (Hatebreed) both make vocal appearances on the record. Tell me how that unfolded and what they added to the record?

Ezack from Skarhead is also on the record and he and Jamie are on a track called "Spit My Rage." Freddy is on a song called "Find My Way." Madball just in general is very influential on us. It's everything they do, musically, lyrically. How they carry themselves on and off the stage, they're just a huge influence on Terror. When the band started out, we started playing shows with them and touring together and through that we just became friends. We had always told Freddy that we would love to have him do a song on our record. So, when it came time to record he was out in LA recording Hazen St. stuff and our drummer has a studio in LA, it pretty much just went from there. The whole Jamie thing just kind of happened since he was out in LA while we were recording. Having those guys bless our record, I think it gives us an edge on things since they're so influential on us. I definitely think more people should collabo-



rate together in hardcore.

Do you find in playing hardcore with the numerous bands you've been in that artistically it can be limiting? With such a polished band like Terror, granted you've only put out one record, what do you think is the key to end up not making the same record twice?
Uh-huh. (pause)

Do you even agree with any of that?

Actually I'm not sure if I agree with that. I think one of the things I love about Madball is that they've always had the same style, they've always stuck to what they know.

Well let me put it this way, what do you think is the key for a band to do in order to differentiate between one record and another?

I think you just need to follow your insides and follow your heart. Not worry about pleasing other people or people who buy your records. You've got to write for yourself. Through life and what you go through I think is what you write about. If things are really good then you're going to write more positive lyrics. If things are really bad in your life then you're going to write really negative lyrics. I definitely think though you should stick to your guns, you should



always try and put out the best songs you can, but you really just have to write for yourself. If you're not happy with your own record then there's no reason to even get up on stage. If you're doing it to please other people then you're just faking it.

"Lowest of the Low" was released on Bridge 9, a record that went over

extremely well in the hardcore scene. The band was out on the road a lot; things seemed really good for Terror. What was the reason to make the jump to Trustkill, can they offer you something that Bridge 9 can't, is it even about that?

It's definitely about that. I love Bridge 9 and I'm really happy that we did our first EP with

them; I don't think anyone else could have done a better job. We'll always want to work with him (Chris/ Bridge 9). We'll always support him and we hope he'll do the finale for our album. I think it just came to a point with Terror that he couldn't handle it anymore. There would be times when we were out on tour with Hatebreed and people couldn't get a copy of our

record because it was out of press. And if you're a full time band giving your life to this and out on the road, you just can't have that happen. We went with Trustkill because I've worked with Josh before in the past with my old band (Buried Alive). I think it's cool that he started a label out of his bedroom and took it to an enormous level. He pushes his bands really hard, and he's got the backing, I think he just has the heart. I don't necessarily think we fit in on his label, but that's a good thing, I think we'll stick out. And also another big factor that separates him from other labels is that he only has like ten bands and they all have similar style. You know, you have other labels like Victory that are branching out and doing rock shit, we aren't really into that.

How do you feel about people responding to the move in a negative way, that your sound is going to change?

Wait till you hear the new record.

Are you worried about losing fans and respect or just focusing on broadening your fan base?

I want to play for as many people as possible. I definitely don't want to play to the same 50-100 kids every tour. That just doesn't make any sense. I want as many people as possible to hear us. I think the band Terror has something to say. We're really positive. I think more people need to hear us. We had heard people say negative things about Trustkill and us, but we're not your typical Bridge 9 band that just plays and caters to that kind of crowd. With the type of integrity and convictions that this band has people can't really say anything. I mean they can but they better look at themselves before they say anything to us. We hope with being on Trustkill that we can slap some reality into these people's faces, show them what's up and give them a dose of reality. **K**

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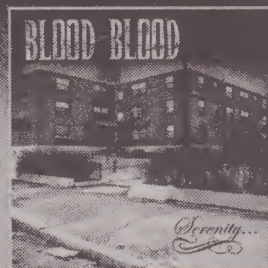
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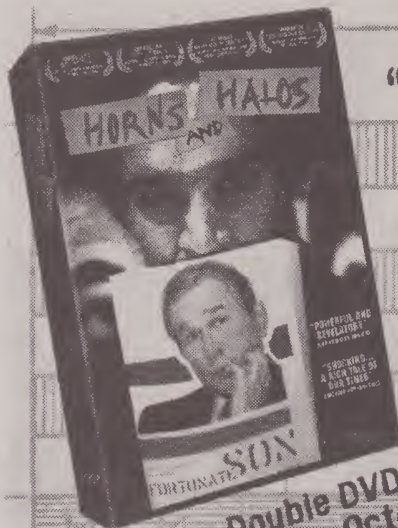


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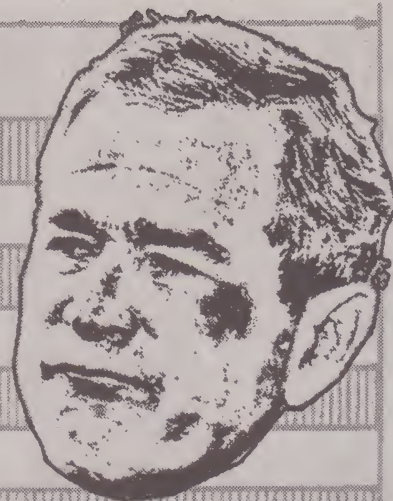
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"I may be accident prone but I have a fucking great time."

By Don Sill

"The secret to life is to die before you die," so says Midtown in their official bio, "To destroy everything you have so you can break all identification with it...when we died, I understood what it meant to live." Midtown, a punk band hailing from New Brunswick, New Jersey, virtually died after Drive Thru/MCA Records dropped them from their label. But instead of wallowing in defeat Midtown rose and found a clear path toward the future by putting the past away and ultimately forgetting all which they knew.

While Midtown-Gabe Saporta, Rob Hitt, Tyler Rann, and Heath Saraceno—could have easily folded and disappeared into oblivion, these four musicians found the strength to move forward. They never viewed their hardships as failure, but as opportunity and used their freedom to re-evaluate their music,

and their lives

The result was "Forget What You Know," the band's third full-length album and first for Columbia Records. This album marks Midtown's resurrection after being left for dead by the media, managers, labels, and critics alike and just may be their best record to date.

AMP caught up with Tyler Rann on the eve of their big record release party and riffed about the new album, their tour with Lost Prophets and how the accident-prone guitarist recently had to have his head stapled shut after busting it open at a show in Austin, Texas.

Tomorrow's a pretty big day for you guys.

Tomorrow is a huge day. The CD comes out and it's gonna be great. But, man, this past weekend we actually did a show in Austin, Texas, it was a radio show, and I got hit with a guitar at the end and I had to have my skull stapled.

How'd that happen? Did you throw your guitar in the air or something?

No, I'm not that stupid. [Laughs] It was

at the end of the show and we were all going crazy and our bass player [Gabe Saporta] was spinning around and the bass came off the strap and clocked me in the head. Luckily it was at the end of the set but, like, I've had better days then today. This week is so big and it's just my luck that this would happen to me.

How many stitches did you need?
It's not stitches...staples!

Staples?

Yeah, I didn't even know that they did that to humans. They stapled my skull, it's only a couple of staples so it's not so bad, I get them out in about a week. Thank God they didn't cut my hair, that was the only thing I was saying when I went in there was "whatever you do, don't touch my hair." I know where my priorities are. [laughs]

[Laughs] there you go. We all have our priorities, man.
Damn right, man.

Still, tomorrow is a huge day for you guys, staples or not.

That's right, man, I'm doing it. I've been waiting my whole life for this record so tomorrow's a big day and I'm excited. We made this record and had it done in January and we've been waiting this whole time to get it out. It's just been so exciting for us and now, finally, everyone will get to hear it and get on the same

page with us and where our band is at now...I can't wait, it's gonna be huge, I hope. We worked so hard on this and we want to get it out there.

You'll get your chance on this tour with Lost Prophets.

Yeah, they're cool guys. We did a tour with them in Europe a few years ago and one night I drank a little too much Absinthe and somehow I was set on fire and they put me out and got me back to the bus...[laughs]...I owe them for that.

[Laughs] You're accident prone, man.

I may be accident prone, but I have a fucking great time. That's all that matters at the end of the day. If you're too careful then you'll miss out on everything.

So the Lost Prophets put you out when you were in flames?

Yeah, I guess I fell into a table in Prague and these people were having dinner with candles...have you ever had real Absinthe before?

No, I haven't.

Well, they don't sell it in America because it has something called 'worm-wood' which is supposed to make you hallucinate. It didn't make me hallucinate but I did drink like 10 shots of it and I was really drunk. I guess I just fell into this table where they had candles lit or something. I woke up the next day and

I'm all covered in wax and they told me that I was on fire and they carried me out about a mile to the bus.

They saved you.

Yeah, and this is my way of repaying them. They put me out and now I'll put them out now.

They're you go. In your bio you guys say, "The secret to life is to die before you die". What did you mean by that?

It's all about what we just mentioned your priorities and understanding who you are and what you want. We were a band when we first started off for all the right reasons. We were making music that we loved, cared about and were passionate about and then after you go through this cycle of making record and being on record labels your vision gets a little skewed and lose focus. Not because you want to on purpose, but because there's so much going on and when you think music then all you care about is music. See, I'm not a business man, that's not my thing, but when you're on these labels and people start to tell you what your supposed to do- and we trusted the people at the label because they're adults and know what they're talking about- and then you begin to lose sight. For us, the moment we were dropped from our former label [Drive Thru/MCA] it was like we stopped existing and like there was nothing left for this band and we were kinda done.



Then we started to realize what was really important to us and that it wasn't about record labels and stuff like that, it was about music and what the four of us could do with music and create something that's greater than just the four of us. Once you go through that and can come back from it, like we have, then that's the greatest thing. It puts everything back into perspective and we realize what really matters and what counts. It all came down to the four of us and what we loved most. It was just like when we first started. So, in a sense, everything kind of died and we were lucky enough to come back from it.

You rose from the dead.

Yeah, and most bands don't get to do that. They just get lost in this cycle and get spit out and die and give up. It's not that they suck, they just never realized what was happening. They get so caught up in the whole thing, the music industry, and what's unique and cool about us is that we kept at it when everyone else told us that we're done.

You guys had no label, no manager, nothing...

Yeah and we turned that negative into a positive and started from scratch.

You guys cleaned the slate, began anew and basically forgot everything you knew.

Yeah, it was a cool experience.

That's an awesome way to approach the album as well.

I don't know if it's because we're harder workers than other people or if we're luckier than other people. I don't know. It's probably a mix of a bunch of things. Now that we've learned this lesson and have gone through this I want to share it with people and I want people to understand. That's the whole point of music, isn't it? To explain things and share things and enlighten them in a sense and I think we do that not only with our music, but with our overall band.

You guys are all about moving forward?

Yeah, I don't think that anyone likes a band that is stagnant. I don't wanna put out the same record twice, I have too much respect for people who listen to music, you know. They already heard that stuff, let's give them something new. People grow up and a band should grow too because one thing that may be relevant to you at one point in your life may not be at another point.

It all follows the theme of the album.

Right, it follows what we want to do and how we're supposed to do it. We're for real and we're honest about it.

How have you guys evolved from a musical standpoint?

Well, we finally learned how to play our

instruments. I've been in bands since I was 13 and I wouldn't want anyone to hear that stuff now. The growth we made from the first record to this one, I mean with the layers and the way we write, it's really grown into it's own. We were all on the same page with this record. We all share a common motivational goal and when we sat down it was like sharing one mind, that sort of thing. In the past we were held back because we didn't play as well and didn't write songs as well and we were all in different places. Now we're all into making Midtown music.

The chemistry got tighter.


Oh yeah. Once you play with people for so long you don't have to think anymore you just have to react. I just already know what everyone else is gonna be doing and I don't even think about it.

I need a prediction. How many staples will you have in your head by the end of the summer?

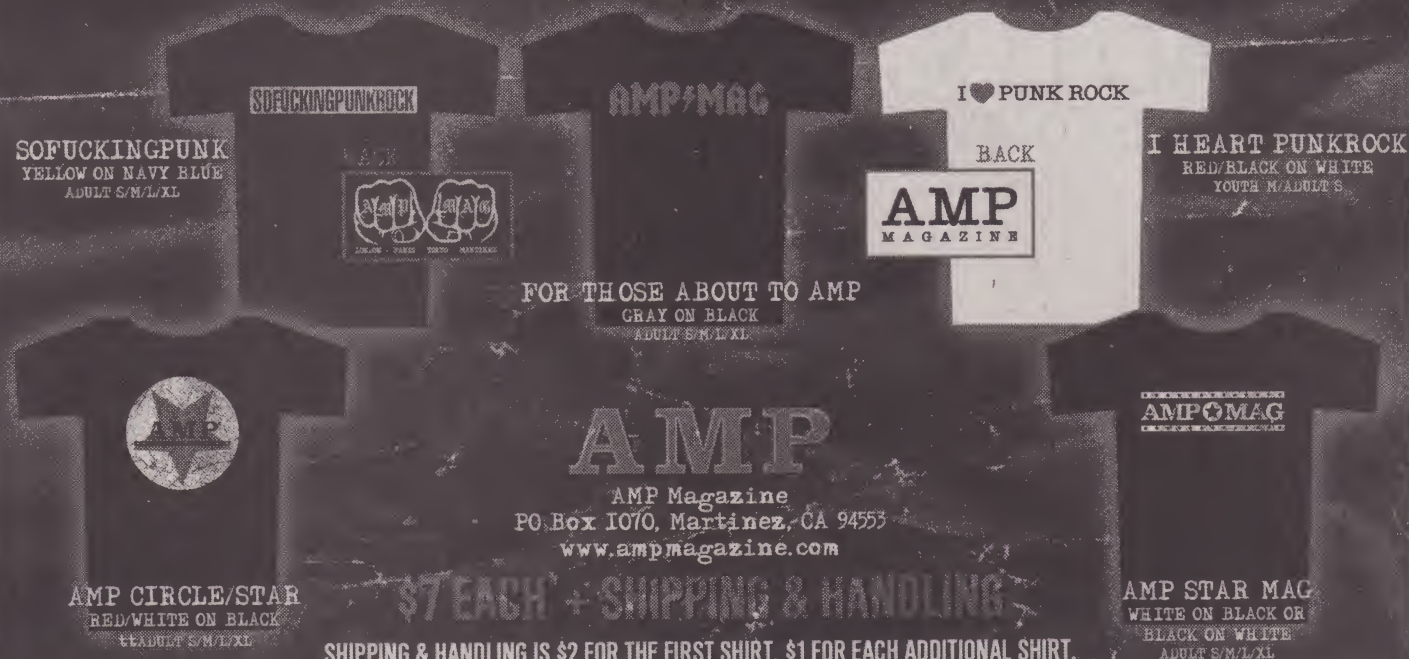
[Laughs] Oh man...Hopefully lots more! If that's what it takes...if it takes 10 more staples in my skull then I'll do it, man.

As long as you don't mess with the hair. [Laughs]

As long as my hair is not cut off, that's all that matters. Hair takes too long to grow.

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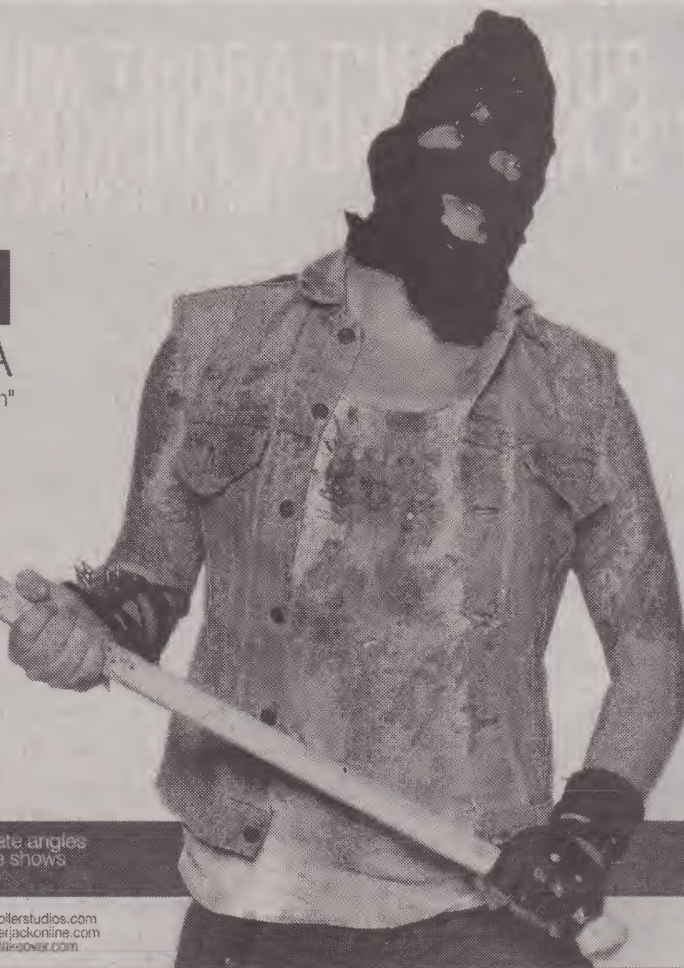
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THE BREAK

Photo by Melissa Manzione



By Matt Cote

It amazes me that more people haven't heard of The Break. After two years, they've released an LP, a split EP with New Jersey brethren Let it Burn, and toured the United States three times - not to mention their recent tour of Europe - and all the while being on a very visible label like Doghouse. But still, so many people haven't heard of them. Well folks, now is the time to take your head out of the sand and open your ears to this amazing band. They can't be stuck with any one label; their music is too versatile to pin them down. But if you like melodic punk rock, something along the lines of Samiam or early Face to Face, but with a good dose of hardcore thrown in, then The Break is the band for you. Kevin Tunney plays guitar in The Break and recently took the time to answer a few questions.

How long have the Break been together, and what brought you guys together?

The Break kind of formed from the ashes of Radar Mercury, which was another Doghouse band. That was now, I'm gonna say, two and a half years ago. It was three of the five members of the Break that played together in this previous band. We had split up Radar Mercury, and in the search for the new singer, in May of 2001, John started coming down and playing with us and right away clicked. He's a great singer for what we were trying to convey, you know? Melodic music with a sense of aggression - a clever blend of punk rock and rock and roll, and John was on

the same wavelength, so we said this was the guy right away. Everything fell right into place and we've been rolling since.

How would you describe your music to someone who has never heard you?

We're like a cross between Dion Warwick and Motorhead. Is that going to print?

Definitely.

Ok.

You guys just got back from your first European tour. How'd it go?

It was awesome. It was five weeks, which you find out to be a long time to be overseas. You start to feel a sense of isolation after a while. Calling home is very expensive and

you're not always in front of a computer to be emailing. So in that sense, we were ready to come home. But as for the actual tour itself, it was great. We all had an amazing time and for the most part, everything went really smoothly. The shows were a great time. They pretty well attended for our first time over there.

Who did you guys play with over there?

Let me think...we played with a great band from Holland called Face Tomorrow. They're on Reflections Records. We played two weeks with them and right away clicked. You know, they're great guys and both bands got along great chemistry together. We also

got along really well in Italy with a band called Vanilla Sky. They're from Rome, also an awesome band. They're both very different bands. I'd say Face Tomorrow is more of a metal influenced rock band. Maybe they'd be lumped in with some of the screamo stuff, but they're really good. Their singer can actually sing, which is important. Vanilla Sky was more of a pop-punk type band, a la Drive-Thru records, but they were really really good. They're the greatest guys ever. We played a show with Black Eyes. They're from DC, a Dischord band. We were supposed to play a couple of dates with Strike Anywhere, but that fell through. We were bummed, we were really looking forward to that, but it didn't happen.

Just before you guys left for Europe, you made a decision to part with your record label Doghouse, which you'd been on since the Break was formed. What brought about that decision?

I just think that musically The Break and Doghouse were going in two entirely different directions. They tend to be putting out more pop-driven music and we tend to be a little more edgy, a little more aggressive. For us, the musical shift was never a conscious decision that we had to be more edgy. I think it was just a response to our surroundings at the time. I think we all kind of needed to rage out, it shows I guess a little bit. It's where we came from, we were all hardcore kids. I think the best answer I can give is that we felt we might have a better chance at getting a few steps ahead if the label was a little more in touch with the music we're doing, and be able to pair us up with bands alike to that. There was no bad blood there, and I wish them the best. I'd like to think it was an amicable split. There were never any shouting matches or anything. **Have you decided upon a**



"When we first started playing, it was trying to go for a set sound, which was basically trying to be aggressive but melodic. Outside of having one or two conversations about that, it's usually been getting in a room or walking in with something we've come up with on our own..."

new label?

Yes, it's going to be Ferret Records.

What made you choose Ferret?

Carl, the owner, the guy behind the helm, is and has been a great, great friend of mine for a very long time, since I was 15. When I was in the hardcore band Endeavor, Carl was our roadie. I've always been around him and I see the way he treats his bands and the results he gets, you know, for them and from their listeners. It just seemed like the right place to be right now. Without ever having to, he's opened a ton of doors for us and has really thrown a ton of opportunities our way. It just seemed like the logical step for us, to be on a label that is from Jersey, and feels like home.

The songs that you put on the split CD were harder and faster than on the LP. Is this the direction the Break is heading it?

Not entirely. I think on the new record you'll find some more aggressive material, but some of the newer songs are also pretty rock and roll, pretty tame. It's going to be a good mix of everything. For the time being, I think we've probably shown the extremes of our spectrum.

When seeing you live, you feel how raw and powerful your songs are. How are you able to express that when you record?

It's hard and I think we fell short of it on our first album. I think that's one of our biggest objectives with the new record, to sound a little more intense and raw, and powerful on disc. We've always felt like that is our live show, and we've got a lot of feedback from friends and other bands that the album doesn't represent what we're capable of being live.

Is any one person responsible for the song-writing duties, or is it something that you all do together?

Mike writes a lot of them, I write some. Moss is involved in bringing them all together, and John writes all the lyrics. So yeah, it's kind of everyone does their share at the end of the day, except with the lyrics which are entirely John. Danny is the drummer, he's new to the band, and we're hoping to have him highly involved in the direct process as well.

Danny joined you guys this past summer. How is he fitting in with the group?

He fit in perfectly well. He's an excellent guy and we all consider ourselves lucky to have him on our team. We're all

really excited to write a record with him.

You kind of answered this earlier, but I'll throw it out anyway. Everyone in your band has at one point or another been involved in hardcore bands. When listening to your stuff, you get the feeling that you guys are finding the balance between hardcore, punk, and indie rock. Is this something you set out to do, or just a by-product of all of your influences?

I think it's like you said, a by-product of the influences. When we first started playing, it was trying to go for a set sound, which was basically trying to be aggressive but melodic. Outside of having one or two conversations about that, it's usually been getting in a room or walking in with something we've come up with on our own and just kind of hammering it out and just going with the feeling and not trying to think too much about how something is going to sound, just try to let it be a little more natural of a progression. **Who would you name as some of your biggest influences?**

Umm...for Jersey bands, I would definitely say Lifetime. For us, they were a huge influ-

ence. For me personally, I would say Samiam and Jawbreaker. Those have always been a couple of torches I've held. I think everyone in the band has a vast array of musical influences and you kind of get to take something from everything, whether that happens to be Led Zeppelin, or that happens to be growing up on Swiz, it's something that you pull something from. But I think you are kind of influenced by everything around you.

You guys are from NJ, a state which has produced one amazing band after another over the past 10 years. How would you describe the current state of your scene?

It's so weird because Jersey is a really small state but there are so many bands that come out of here. It happens time and time again. I'm not really sure how. There are some great young bands coming up now. You have Let it Burn, you have Merciana, the Degenerics are back in action. They're a great punk band from around here. I'm pretty excited about it. I mean, it's a great state to have grown up in. At any given time, especially on a weekend, there were three shows within an hour of each other. At the same time, it sometime affects



one turnout at a show to another because it's such a saturated place. Not to mention being directly between New York City and Philadelphia.

The punk and indie rock scenes have seen a surge in popularity over the past year. So many bands have gone on to major labels, including The Bronx and A Static Lullaby, both of whom worked with Ferret, and All-American Rejects of your prior label, Doghouse. Overall, do you think this is good or bad for the underground music scene?

At the end of the day, a major's goal is to make money and it's important to always know that. I guess for a lot of indies, that is the goal now too,

whether it was from conception or not. I'm not someone who sits here and says "don't buy anything from a major, I'll never sign to a major." With the right situation I might very well, you know? It's not inherently evil, I guess, but there are some results of it that — it's the problems you have when it becomes such a commodity, it becomes an assembly line kind of thing and it loses its identity, it loses its values. And you kind of see it when you go to certain types of shows now, and don't ask me to name bands because I'm not gonna, but just that it's become, for lack of a better expression, kind of cock-rock and there aren't the values there. There isn't the security of, you know,

like this is our thing. For me growing up in High School, it was my escape from all the fucking lame people I went to school with, you know, to have this on weekends. That's what I did. And there's really not an escape anymore when you go to some of these bigger shows and you're surrounded by all of these people who, at least on the surface, couldn't be further from what you identify with, and it's sort of odd that it's gotten to such a good level. At the same time, some great bands have gone on to have great success. I guess I'll use Jimmy Eat World as an example of a band that I think is good and kind of stuck to the way they sounded by and large. And, ya know, 10 years ago they probably wouldn't have crossed over into the main stream the way they have now. So there's give and take on it, I guess.

So if the right situation presented itself, you wouldn't be totally adverse to signing to a major?

No, like I said, it would have to be the right situation. I would want to be in the position where I'd have enough pull to really make the decisions for us and have total artistic control, and a lot of times bands aren't in the position. I know so many horror stories that it's as scary of a thing as it is an exciting thing to be in that situation.

From your experiences, what is the worst part about the music industry?

That's a good question. The worst part about the music industry is that people start to think in terms of sales rather than in terms of art. I don't

know if that sounds entirely cliché or obvious. You know, I said before things become commodities. That's just not the world I came from. When I was growing up and the bands I listened to — maybe I read too many Ian MacKaye interviews at one time or another. It sounds kind of corny and idealistic maybe, but to me at the end of the day, it's the music that matters. It's not how many records I sell. Of course everyone wants to sell records. It's silly for me to say that I don't want to. Yeah, I'd love to be able to pay my rent off of music alone. But at the end of the day it's the music that matters, and a lot of the people who are taking these steps, whether it's from the label end or from the artists end, they make sacrifices, particularly with their integrity, to get to that next level — to be THE big band. And I just never wanted to be that guy.

Do you have any plans for a US tour in the coming months?

As soon as the record comes out, I assume we're going to be on tour kind of forever. (I laugh at this.) You think I'm joking. Probably we'll do a good chunk of the summer and the fall here. Within the next year, they want us to come back to Europe for another tour. So we have both of those going on. It should be a pretty busy year for The Break and we couldn't be more any more excited to hammer out this new record.

For up to date information on The Break, visit www.thebreak-page.com ☛



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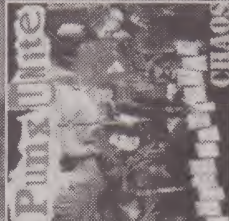
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By Ryan Bartek

As the hardcore scene grows larger and approaches an early apex within the mainstream eye, the closer all involved in the subgenre come to a generalized stereotype. Following Ozzfest's massive success, uniform sounds and styles are dangerously becoming the norm. However, unlike the dreaded nu-metal archetype, hardcore is not a product by any means and is approaching yet another violent mutation in it's classic strain of DNA. One band refusing to be pigeonholed by choppy start/stop riffing and the usual breakdown psychosis is Michigan's own Dissonant. "Suffocating In A Dead Scene" is their latest recording on the small time All Or Nothing indie label (Sadomasochism; The Rockit King). It is a strong album that challenges the broadly accepted staples of the genre while splicing in elements of thrash, prog, metalcore and classic metal with a ton of groove. Here to speak on the ever-evolving nature of the Dissonant war machine is guitarist Ben Allen.

TELL ME ALL ABOUT THE ENTITY THAT IS DISSONANT.

Ben Allen: We are a five piece metal band from Grand Rapids, MI. We just put out our first full-length album "Suffocating in a Dead Scene" back in April. We've been playing now for four years but we've only really taken ourselves seriously for the past two. We've been touring regionally for the past two years as well. We're not a band full of egos or anything like that. we're just here to drink beer, play metal and tour.

WHAT IS THE MICHIGAN SCENE LIKE, IS IT REALLY ALL THAT DEAD, AND HOW HAS DISSONANT BEEN PERCEIVED?

Michigan has a pretty cool scene. Over most of the state there are mostly hardcore bands and DIY mentalities. Though we do a lot of DIY stuff, we like to focus most of our efforts on touring out of

state in larger clubs in bigger cities. Places like Traverse City, Saginaw, and Detroit have good hardcore DIY scenes, but for a metal bands like us we sometimes don't go over well at shows like that because we are more speed and trash based other than breakdown based. There is also a HUGE Christian hardcore and SXE movement out here that we definitely don't fit in with. I guess we're kind of the ugly duckling of the Michigan scene because we don't really fit in well anywhere in state though we do have many fans all over it.

IS THERE A DEFINITE THEME OR OVER-ALL MESSAGE CONVEYED ON SUFFOCATING IN A DEAD SCENE?

"Suffocating" is the only song on the album that I wrote the lyrics for. I penned them out a huge frustration I was having at the time about the state of hardcore and metal worldwide. The Lyrics are

basically about how I feel that 95% of new heavy acts coming out today are played out rip-offs of something that used to be cool. Hell, even the music Dissonant makes is a rip off of something else, but that is something we are striving to put in our past with our new material for our next CD.

WHAT IS THE "TREND OF THE END?"

"Trend of the End" was written in response to the growing trends in the Metal and Hardcore scene that we wish we could crush. Whether it be musical trends, fashion trends, or style trends, the hardcore scene is now submerged in faceless followers. I think a lot of the lyrics were a direct attack at fashion within hardcore. For instance, I went to a Between The Buried And Me and Evergreen Terrace show at Saint Andrews in Detroit not too long ago and I seriously counted 47 white studded belts. That is just an example about how being a hardcore kid is not only about what you listen to, but what you wear as well, and to us as a band that is something we try to crusade against. I can't tell you how many times we've showed up and played shows for strict hardcore crowds and were ignored not because of our music, but because we did not look hardcore enough for anyone to care. That and we know a bunch of people that started dressing, acting, and prescribing to the whole nu-hardcore movement because it was becoming cool. Lesson of the day -don't try and be 18 visions because you love 18 visions, be yourself and be true to yourself.



"DEATHWISH 5?!" WHAT ABOUT "CHINO?" "MURPHY'S LAW?" AND HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A GREATER SUSPENSE FULFILLER THAN THE SHOOTOUT END SEQUENCE IN "DEATH WISH 3?"

You know what, the only reason that song is called "Charles Bronson Was Great in Deathwish 5" is because we went 4 months playing it live without having a title. Finally after months of calling it the new song live, our keyboard player at the time was like "I'm calling it 'Charles Bronson was Great in Deathwish 5' so you'll all quit bitching." Thus the song was named.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE FANTASTIC FOUR CHARACTER AND WHY?

The Thing..... cuz he'll whup your ass!

FROM WHAT I UNDERSTAND, A GREAT DEAL OF DISSONANT'S TOURING SUCCESS COMES FROM THE UNDERGROUND NETWORK IN THE FORM OF VFW SHOWS AND D.I.Y. BASEMENT VENUES. I KNOW HERE IN MICHIGAN WE HAVE THE HARDCORE BOARD, WHICH FACILITATES SO MUCH TRAFFIC.

MY QUESTION IS IN ALL OF YOUR ENCOUNTERS, WHERE OUTSIDE OF THAT NETWORK IS THE HARDCORE REVOLUTION FULLY MAINTAINED? WHAT ARE THE BEST SITES OUT THERE FOR ALL THE STRUGGLING D.I.Y. TOURS TO TAKE REFUGE?

In my opinion, the hardcore movement is maintained so long as people keep interested and keep seeking out new, fresh bands. We did have a lot of success via DIY venues and whatnot, but we don't like to consider ourselves a strictly DIY band. For new hardcore and metal acts, DIY shows are the way to go. It will be the best and easiest way for you to get in front of people who would like your style and play in an intimate and friendly atmosphere. If anything DIY shows are good for making new friends and lasting relationships which will domino into more fans and more exposure.

HOW DO YOU GUYS GO ABOUT WRITING YOUR COMPOSITIONS?

I am the riff machine but my structuring abilities are weak. That's where Scott (our other guitar player) comes in because he has a producer's ear. Our singer writes almost all of his own stuff and we

just kind of let him go with it. As far as how we put it together, I'll normally come in with like 5 minutes worth of straight shredding and we just go riff by riff and see what works best structurally for all instruments. Really we just jam and it happens.

COULD PETER STEELE TAKE DANZIG IN A STREETFIGHT?

Easily. Not only is Peter Steele like 3 feet taller than Danzig, but Danzig is all talk anyway. Hopefully everyone reading this has seen the mpeg of Danzig getting his ass handed to him by the dude from North Side Kings. If not seek it out because Danzig gets his ass beat. You're asking a devout Type O fan though, so I'm a bit biased.

NOW THAT 2004'S OZZFEST HAS COMPLETELY WIPED NU-METAL OFF THE FACE OF THE PLANET, HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT HARDCORE BECOMING THE NEXT BIG THING IN HEAVY MUSIC IN THE EYES OF THE MAINSTREAM? IS THIS A DANGEROUS TREND? HOW DO YOU SEE THIS IMPACTING AMERICA?

Very dangerous! In five years hardcore will be the next Nu-metal and will be looked upon with the same disgust as nu-metal is now. It's ok though, that is the cycle that every musical trend takes. It is the essence of trends themselves. They cycle through and they fade away. I think the peak popularity of hardcore will come in the next two years, have another year and a half or two of being on top, and then will fade out like any other.

BEST HORROR MOVIE KILL OF ALL TIME?

Every kill in "Day of the Dead."

BEST GUITAR SOLO OF ALL TIME?

"Eruption," by Van Halen.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THE NEXT ALBUM?

Defy all notions of what people think of Dissonant, or what a metal band is allowed to do. We are on the quest to write 100% original music that cannot be classified into any trend or movement. Huge progressions and compositions, giant symphonic structures, strange instruments, the whole 9 yards. Basically we want to write a record that is undeniably unique, and cultivate a sound that will break all boundaries. After all, we're on the quest to take over the world.

ANY CHANCE OF A TOUR OR DVD?

We're doing a tour with Byzantine, and Beyond the Embrace in September, and we'll be going out again in early November with tons of regional weekend warrior stuff in between. We're working on plans for a live video shoot right now and hope to put out a DVD after our next CD. Check out www.dissonantmusic.com for all the latest info.

ARE YOU A FIRM BELIEVER IN THE REVOLUTION?

Yes, almost too much. Michigan Militia baby!

WHO WILL YOU BE VOTING FOR THIS YEAR?

Kerry equals the lesser of two evils.

LAST GOOD BOOK YOU READ?

"The DaVinci Code."

MOST UNDERRATED MOVIE/BAND IN YOUR OPINION?

"The Big Lebowski" and Skeleton Witch. WORSHIP THE WITCH!!! ☿



Further Seems Forever

Interview & Photos By Duncan of GiveMeStrength.net

Shortly after this interview with Further Seems Forever drummer, Steve Kleisath, the band's existence became an uncertainty. Further Seems Forever still plan on releasing their final album, and completing one more tour, before they move on into the future. Here is an official statement from the band regarding their present situation.

"As a band, Further Seems Forever in all forms, has experienced together the full range of human emotions, from sorrow to elation. We have all been emotionally bruised by the course of events. Finally, we want all the fans to know what they have meant to us. In times of stress and disunity, the faith and love of "our people" has been a consolation; much more than that it has been a confirmation that all we have done is not in vain. Our music mattered to you and, therefore, achieved its most hoped for effect. The remaining members of the band will continue to create music together in the near future, as we have done for the past 10 years."

"Emo" used to be the big buzzword that bands didn't want to claim. Now there seems to be the big drama over what is or isn't "indie." What are your opinions about these titles?

I don't really like to label or

classify our music. We don't try to sound like anybody. It's just the music that comes out of us. I guess you could call us melodic rock, but for record store purposes you could call us indie. We want to play for as many people as possible who can relate to our music or our

lyrics. I think labels draw people away from music that they might like if they just listened to it without a label.

What about bands that use the "indie scene" as a stepping stone to get a quick buzz and push into rock stardom?

There are bands who use "sounds like" or "in the vein of" to help find a scene. Some bands do use those terms as a spring board into the main stream, and I think it shows a lack of integrity. But labels can also be detrimental and pigeon hole bands, so it can go either way.

FSF's ex singer Chris Carrabba and Dashboard Confessional have become a mainstream success. Do you think that is hurts or helps independent music?

As a friend, I am happy for

Chris. Even though the circumstances of when he left, it was kind of awkward, but it's water under the bridge now. We were friends before and after the group. So, I am happy for him as a friend, because I know he has worked hard. He started out doing the grass roots / indie thing, and was playing for crowds that no one with an acoustic guitar would usually play for. He put in the road work, so it wasn't like he was an overnight success. I am happy for him and his success. As far as hurting the indie scene, I wouldn't really call what he is doing independent. It's just stripped down rock on an acoustic guitar. He helped revitalize it, and was in the right place at the right time. I don't think it was detrimental or crazy beneficial to the indie scene. I think it was just kind of neutral. As a personal friend I am happy for him. Jason fits us much better now, and I



think Chris is more in is element doing what he is doing now.

As one of the original members who came from Strongarm, why does it seem that hardcore kids move on to make great indie or pop punk bands?

Maybe because they are so suppressed in the hardcore scene with the politics and pigeon holing and all the other stances that the scene had at one point. Maybe it pushed them to want to explore the complete other side of the music spectrum. They are no longer restricted and can start listening to other types of music. The cool parts of hardcore are the energy and the crowd gets into it, and you feed off that live. For us being labeled a Christian band, it was a double whammy, because there were so many other politics going on. In our situation, the band definitely served its purpose because it was a ministry band. Strongarm will always hold a special place in my heart. I am more happy now doing what we are doing musically, because there are no restrictions and the sky is the limit.

How's is the transition from playing in front of kids kick boxing and doing pile-ons to a more stationary crowd, except for fanatic girls?

It would be a plus if that happened! That type of crowd came out when we opened up for New Found Glory or Something Corporate. When we play with them, the screaming girls are evident. It's pretty weird. I just want the crowd to be into it. If they want to go off that's fine, or they can just stand there and appreciate it. When we do our own headlining tours it's really hard to discern what type of crowd we are going to get. We are sort of on the fringe of alot of different scenes of music. We don't really have our own niche.

Has the band come to the point where you have to decide to make it a full time career or go home and settle down with a 9-5 job?

We are sort of debating that right now. This year we have made enough money to pay all of our bills and have a little left over. So we are living the American dream in a way. We are getting paid for doing what we love to do. But when you

have families to feed, it's a little too close for comfort. We need a reason to justify being away from them for that long, on the relationship end. You could make a living doing this if you were never on MTV but had a crazy cult following. I would say MTV and videos really dictate alot these days, even in the scene that we are involved with. Like Brand New, when their record first came out, they had really good sales for that first week, and then it dropped off to regular sales. Then the video started to get rotation, and they sky rocketed. Its sad, but video stations control a bands destiny to a certain extent, from jumping from one level to a higher level and in a short period of time regardless of the work on the road.

With the new addition of videos, to you think the importance placed on fashion is counterintuitive to the genre's original ideals?


There are definitely some bands who have earned their status on fashion alone instead of what I would consider quality of music. It seems that fashion may dictate what people like. Hopefully that's just a minority instead of the majority.

What's your trick to pass time on the road?

Now I have a game for you guys. We play a game called "Who Goes"; it's a great time killer when we are on the road. You put two entertainers, bands, musicians, girls, movies or whatever against each other, then you have to go back in time and erase one from history. Even if you love both of them, you have to make a decision. But there is an escape clause. You can say it can't be done, but then you have to blow your own head off. - Who goes ... "Letterman or Conan?" - "Salma Hayek or Angelina Jolie?" - "Godfather or Indiana Jones?" - "Lord Of The Rings or Star Wars?" - "Bugs Bunny or Kermit the Frog?" - "Rolling Stones or the Beatles?" - "Misfits or Bad Brains?" - ya' know.

Final comments or words of wisdom?

Think about buying our record. Check out "How To Start A Fire." Go to www.furtherseemsforever.com. Sign up on the message board and meet new people, check out tour dates or see how the new record is coming along.

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TEXAS TERRI

By Janelle Jones

A hhhhhh! There's just SO much I want to include in this interview. Shit, can Texas Terri talk! And what interesting stories she has to relate! But, alas, if our conversation were printed in these pages, there'd be no more room for any other bands. Hmm...but that might not be a bad thing, for Texas Terri is a character who's larger than life and ready, after years of preparation, to take the rock 'n' roll underground by storm. "I wanna leave my mark," she stresses, "I wanna piss on every tree I can." And this year, releasing *Your Lips...My Ass!* on TKO, an exquisite testament to the songstress' powerful songwriting ability, rock 'n' roll roots, and unparalleled attitude; and touring the U.S. (with Thee Trash Brats' guitarist Ricky Rat and some very special dates with Dead Boys' legendary Cheetah Chrome on guitar) and Europe, the name Texas Terri (or TxT if you're nasty) is sure to be emblazoned in anyone's mind who's either heard her on record or live. I guess this means no tree is safe...

What was the first band you were in?

My first official band in Austin was The Other Guys and we did a bunch of cover songs. The first song I ever sang - 'cause I was terrified - but it was "Pushin' Too Hard" by The Seeds. I love that song, and that lasted a couple years. Then I had a very short-lived band called Puss 'n' Boots with this band called The Droogs - they were my back-up band. [Laughs] They played first and then I played, but they knew I'd have a big mouth and I could get more people to their shows, so it was like, "We'll do this for you 'cause we know you'll pack our shows." I told them they were the "Puss" and I was the "Boots," but the guitar player in The Droogs, Alan Black, well, he's dead now, of course another one of those casualties from drugs, but he helped me write my first song, which was "Cavewoman", which I never recorded until about five or six years ago when we recorded it for the Texas Terri and the Stiff Ones' record *Eat Shit*, and I still love that song.

This is all in Austin?

Yeah, and the guy who was the guitar player for The Other Guys, he used to live in California a while before - he was originally from Texas also - but he moved out here to L.A. He would come back to Austin and we'd record songs. He'd take my lyrics home to L.A. with him and put them together with the songs, and then he want-

ed me to sing on it, so he would bring it back to Austin. He convinced me I should come visit L.A. because Austin's just way too small for me. It's like I got way too much energy for Austin even though it's a great place to be from. Even New Yorkers, when they would come to Austin, they're like, "What are you doing HERE?! You should be in NY!" And I'm just like this little small-town girl, like, [hick accent] "Where's that? What's NY?" [Laughs] ...Back to my original [story], the guitar player from my first band in Austin, he was afraid I wouldn't get on the plane, so he flew to Austin to fly back to L.A. with me to visit for the first time, and I thought it was really cool. Six weeks later I moved out to L.A., but he - the guitar player, Tommy - drove all the way out in a van to pick me up...I was getting cold feet, so it's a good thing he did drive all the way to Austin, so I told him, "Okay, I'm not going unless I can bring my cat." ...Also I had to bring - because one of my fans/friends in Austin worked in the university and brought me one of those pigs they dissect in...

Right, a fetal pig.

Right! She brought me this really cute, little pink one I called Pickles, you know, 'cause they're pickled. Then she brought me these other two that were spotted and they looked really scary, it's like enough with the pigs! But I also brought those out here in an ice chest. I had to have my cat and my pick-



PHOTO CREDIT: MATT CODDINGTON

led pigs. Those were the two most important items and I had to draw the line. He went for it. And then we were gonna start a band out here. [Describes her NUMEROUS bands that followed, and explains how she met friend and long-time collaborator in Texas Terri and The Stiff Ones, Demon Boy, a.k.a. Don Cilurso - her "Keith Richards for six years."] I don't have anyone like Demon Boy anymore, but it's all right 'cause I made due 'cause I've had a lot of people I've played with in the last year and it's really good to play with a lot of different people. And I've written songs with a couple different people and my back was against the wall and I had to write songs by myself on guitar 'cause me and Demon Boy would always co-write songs. He'd get the bulk of the music together, and he used to write

down stuff I'd say and write the lyrics. That's how a lot of the lyrics got started. He was like, "Man, you're sitting on a gold mine. You just don't even realize it." So that was really cool having a partner like that who actually pays attention to things and really knows you and can just utilize this stuff creatively. And I was really good at arranging songs... We would fight a little bit over these songs 'cause he would hate when I would cut certain parts, but he realized I was better arranging songs than he was. And so we worked everything out, but there was always a little fight there, you know, kinda like the Keith and Mick or the Steven Tyler/Joe Perry thing, I mean there's always been friction between those people. [Laughs] I wish we got as famous as them! That was a really good time. But now a lot of evolution has come

about. I'm finding my new direction every day. There are so many different directions I could take at this moment. I feel like I've jumped off a cliff but I haven't landed yet. I've been having all these experiences like playing with all these different guitar players...

Right, and how about on this record? You got some amazing people to contribute.

When we did my new record, getting all these different people to play on it made it more of an event for me, and something that will last forever. I wish I could've actually made it a bigger event, but some things fell through – like Lemmy was supposed to sing on it.

Oh yeah?!

Yeah, but he promises he's gonna sing on my next one 'cause every time I talk about my record, he's like [in a Lemmy voice], "I should've been on that record. Ugh!" You know, he's all frustrated about it... He's just like, "Promise I'm gonna be on the next one." And Slash was ALMOST on it, but he was too busy, but he was calling all the time. Slash is just such a nice guy, man! He was calling me after his day in the studio with Ray Charles, and then he had to fly out to New York for a music awards show. It just didn't work out, but just that he was there in spirit was pretty cool. But, I got [a song, "The Rocker"] with Cherie Curie. Wayne Kramer's on the record and Ryan Roxie from Alice Cooper and Marc Diamond from The Dwarves and Motochrist and Dave Teague from The Dickies, I mean, that's not bad. It's like a party. [Laughs] So I did pretty good, but I can't wait to have the time to write some more songs and come up with something with Lemmy to do 'cause Lemmy's just one of my favorite people on the planet. He's intelligent, he's charming, [and] he's very honest. He's hilarious and I can't say more about his music. To me he's the epitome of a rock star, and he was telling me people said he wasn't gonna be able to last this long successfully. And what's it been, 30 years?! He's like, "I showed them!" He told me I reminded him of Wendy O. [Williams] 'cause they used to hang out. That was pretty flattering. And then Cheetah Chrome told me I reminded him of Stiv [Bators]. It's just these little perks in life that keep me going with this band stuff. It's such a rat race – unless you can find a good manager. Running the band yourself is just such a rat race. You have to be involved in the business up to a point, but I've been taking care of the business in my band for nine years now and I wanna quit my job – NOT the singing part, the



PHOTOS BY ANARCHY ALICIA / WWW.PRETTYANDPUNK.COM

managing part. Managing my band – if that was my job, I would've quit it three years ago, but I can't. I'm not in a position to quit my job that I hate, so if there's any managers out there, please let me get back to SINGING – being the frontwoman that I love to be. I miss just being the frontperson so bad.

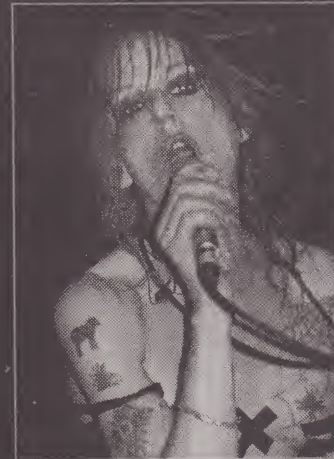
Who knows, maybe on the road you'll meet someone.

I hope so. I'd just really like to get back to the music for a while 'cause I got all these songs in my head I wanna write, but since my record came out, I'm overlooking the U.S. record label [and] the European record label, I'm overlooking the U.S. tour being made and then the European one... I don't like coming home [from touring], coming home means I'm managing the band – when I'm out on the road, I'm being IN the band, and I just love that... To me, music shouldn't be a business; passion shouldn't be a business, and when it becomes a business, it becomes a buzzkill... Just even having a temporary manager would be good. [Laughs] I mean, you still have to oversee your manager, but at least they're doing all that stuff for you. But, whatever. Whine, complain, whine, complain.

Going back to something you

said before, about how people tell you you remind them of different frontpeople, like Stiv, I always see everyone mentions the comparison to Iggy Pop. How does that make you feel?

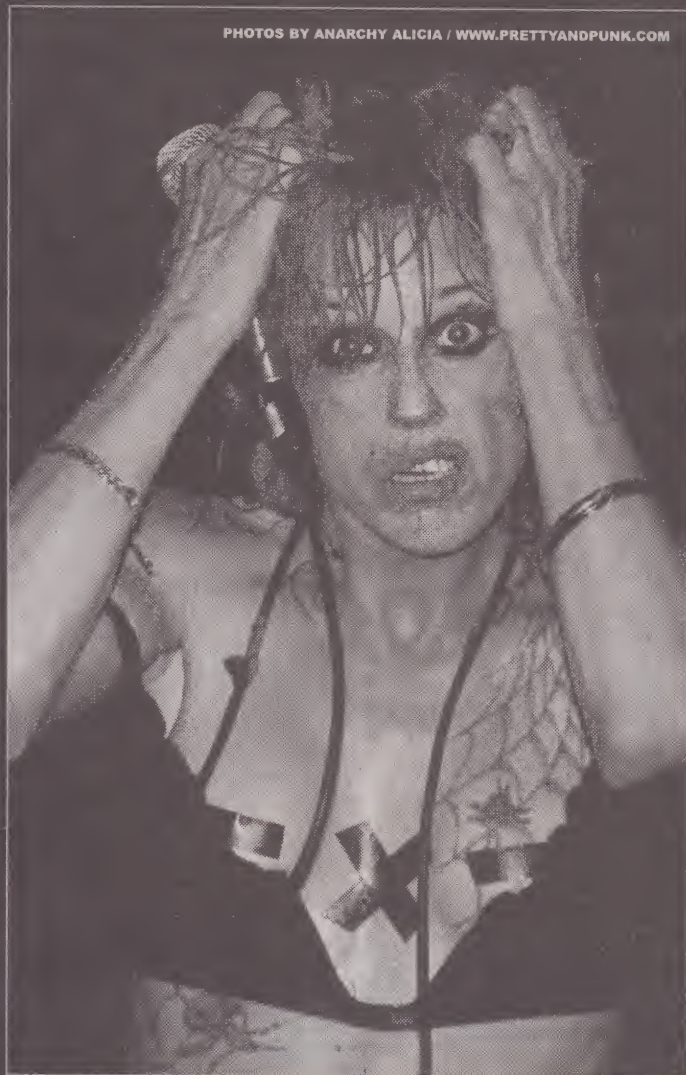
[Laughs] Well, you know what? On a personal level who the fuck wouldn't wanna be compared to the greatest fucking frontperson on the planet? Especially since I had never seen him. I finally had to see him play to find out what's up with this. I get compared to Mick Jagger, Steven Tyler, but I get a lot of that Iggy thing. It kinda became embarrassing – not the fact that I get compared to Iggy 'cause there's nothing embarrassing about that at all! It's just that if I met Iggy, I would hate to have people go, "Oh, this is the female Iggy Pop," or something weird like that 'cause he's so sick of people being compared to him. One of his [and my] good friends saw me play at The Continental [NYC], and I'm watching him watch me, and he's got this look on his face, and I'm like, "What's up his fucking ass?" And when I got off stage I'm talking to him like, "What's that fucking weird look you were giving me the whole time?" and he's like, "It's so weird because off-stage you're just TxD, but onstage you become Iggy – the spirit of Iggy." And he's like, "I gotta tell Iggy about this," and I went, "Please don't 'cause you know



what he's gonna say? 'Who gives a fuck!'" There's so many people that are compared to him... It's flattering, but I hate it when people think I say I'm the female Iggy Pop. I don't say I'm anybody except TxD. My fans and the press say I'm the female Iggy Pop 'cause I'm not that fucking arrogant! How embarrassing would it be? A lot of people think I say that about myself. [She relates a story of having to set some chick straight on a message board about this matter... Even when she speaks of her awesome version of "I Got a Right", she says emphatically, and partly incredulously, "I wasn't trying to be Iggy when I did that song. Why would I try to, Iggy stands alone. It would be ridiculous to try to even copy that guy."]

[Since this conversation was so unwieldy and we often went on tangents, like at this point, where she went from talking about Iggy to her album, here's a bit of the backstory for recording Your Lips...My Ass! and how it was made:]

I was at a time in my life where I'd just been writing material without [Demon Boy], so it was kinda scary... 'cause I never really exposed [songs] that had just come out of me without having that partner in crime. I wanted to record these new songs I'd written and co-written with other people, so that's the first four songs on the record. And the second four songs on the record are left over from when me and Demon Boy were writing together as a team, and I guess the last four are – that song "Love Hates Me" that was written by Nick Cooper [in the band] Marky Ramone and the Speed Kings. The Speed Kings live in Belgium, but when they were coming out here to do some shows Nick contacted me about doing a 7" split. That was the song they were putting on and I put the demo of "Dirty Action" on the other side. And when I heard "Love Hates Me", I just love that song so much, so I wanted to do



it for my record and that was really cool 'cause nobody really knows that song. They think I wrote it, but oh, well, too bad, I didn't! [Laughs] "The Rocker", the Thin Lizzy song, I had just heard that, this DJ friend of mine was playing it at a club and I'd never heard it [and I knew I wanted to cover it]. These songs I don't do live, I don't know why, maybe some day.

But as far as the timing of making this record, there was so much evolution going on in my life. I was really changing focus and direction, but I wanted to record all these songs because I wasn't sure if I was gonna keep being in a band at that time. I hate it when bands don't record that phase and then they're lost forever. I wanted to record this phase for myself... It was a weird time for me. I wasn't having fun being in a band anymore, so it was like I wanna do a record; I have to finish this phase. It felt very alien to me. Everything did. It was very clear that what I wanted to do musically and what the other guys in the band wanted to do musically or... 'cause I wanna be a rock

star. I'm very ambitious I wanna pursue that, and they would just as soon just play their music. They could care less whether or not they're well-known - not like me. There was friction, so it was time to move on. And I'm still moving on. [Laughs]... I just think everyone should go buy my record. That's what I think 'cause it's time that I become HUGE in the underground because if Courtney Love can do it and Brody from The Distillers, I would love to join the ranks with them, but we'll see what happens. I think the most important thing is that I love my new record and that I get to go out and see my fans that I love so much.

When we were talking the other day, you were explaining how you had to be totally happy with the record before you'd release it. That basically it had to be perfect.

[On the] first record, *Eat Shit*, [the philosophy] with me and Demon Boy, [was] until we like this record; we're not gonna put it in the can, and I was really glad he was like that with me. A lot of people rush



you. But if I can't listen to my record for the rest of my life, then why even bother? It's all I have. When you're gonna capture you're creativity, it's something I wanna be proud of for myself for the rest of my life. And also I'm like the salesperson for my band, and I can't sell something I'm not happy with, so the whole thing has to be something I really love and I gotta be proud of it. I'm probably a little over-the-top with it, but so what; it's the only thing I really have that's gonna last forever. So when it came to doing *Your Lips... My Ass!*, I was a little concerned because I was in charge of the whole thing; I didn't have my Demon Boy there with me, how I was gonna make this top my last record because after all the shit that had gone down in the last couple years, I wanted to say, "Yeah, a lot of shit went down, but listen to this." And I was a little worried about it 'cause you wanna outdo what you've done 'cause people compare, and you don't wanna let yourself down... One day [after recording everything] I was home listening to the mixes, and I went, "I like this better than *Eat Shit*!... I was so excited 'cause I was like, "I LOVE my new record!" I [realized] this was all worth it - all the craziness.

You gotta describe a live TxT performance! What are we in for?

[Laughs] The female Iggy Pop, of course!

[Sarcastically] Yeah, besides that!

Well, let's see, you take all the people I'm compared to: Iggy Pop, Wendy O., Steven Tyler, Mick Jagger, Stiv Bators.

Oh, I heard a good one: Lux Interior!

Yeah, which is cool 'cause I love Lux and Ivy, they're like my heroes. And Joan Jett and I get compared to Brody and Courtney. So, you take all these people and what they really have in common is spontaneity, honesty, and just soul. They give you every bit of their passion and energy when they're onstage. And that's pretty much what a TxT show is like. Some people get scared of me 'cause they say I'm very intense, but when they meet me they're like, "You're not scary at all," and I'm like, "No, I'm not fucking scary! I'm a fucking performer." So I guess there's that dangerous edge people talk about, which I don't find dangerous at all. I guess maybe spewing your emotions can feel dangerous to people. I like to go out in the audience and sing to people... and get them involved 'cause that's why I'm there: I love my audience, they're onstage with me, I go out in the audience and watch them sing. I just like to make people feel really welcome.

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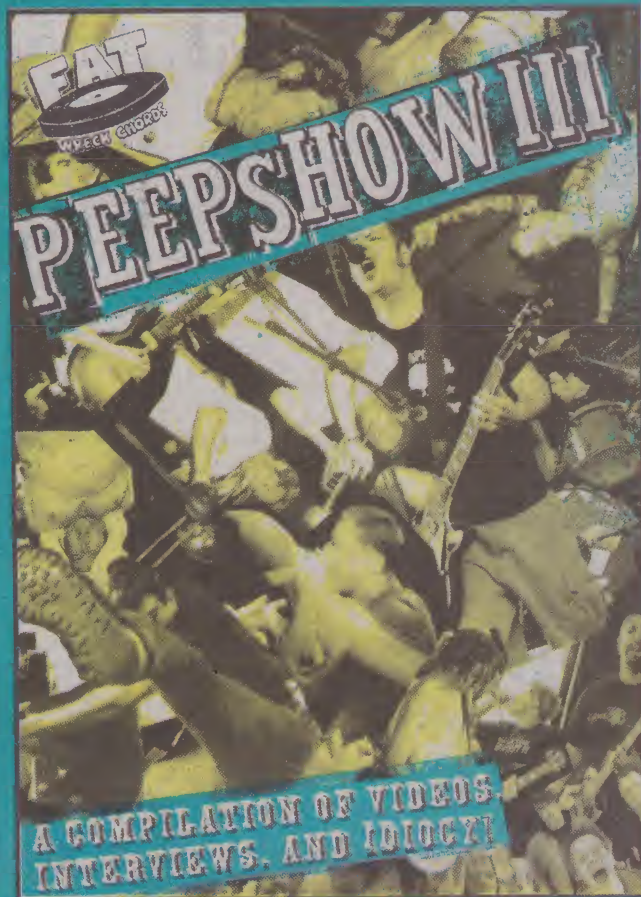


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AN INTERVIEW WITH BASSIST DEREK HARN AND VOCALIST JOHN PETTIBONE

By Duncan / Givemestrength.net

There is an old saying that, the only constant is change, and Himsa knows this well. Every step of the way over the last six years, Himsa has constantly faced change from switching record labels, musical styles, lyrical content, and a handful of member changes. Because Himsa had the determination to persevere through change, they have become a constant in the metal / hardcore scene. You can see them sharing the stage with bands such as Shadows Fall, Bleeding Through and AFI, or listen to their latest full length "Courting Tragedy And Disaster". Like it or not, Himsa is here to stay.

After a hand full of stagnant years and massive member changes, what kept Himsa going?

DH: One of the ex members started us off on a kick. That was Brian Johnson, who quit the band a couple of years ago. We had got to a point where I felt I am not going to put a lot of effort into it. I'm just going to let them ride it out and do whatever they want to do, and I will just participate as much as they do.



When we lost our singer, Brian got Pettibone to sing for us. Then he got things into gear for us. So we picked up, and ran with it. It started picking up so much, that Brian decided it was something that he couldn't put all of his time into, so I took over and just started pushing the band, and have been doing so, ever since then.

Was it hard having such a slow start, or was good to have time to get everything together?

DH: It was hard in regard that, we kept on having to find new members and teach them the songs. That definitely set us back. We had to quit half of a US tour, because our drummer quit. They were all minor set backs, but each time we brought new members in, it actually rejuvenated the band, and allowed us to go further then we ever have before. For everyone that's in the band now, we are all on the same page of where we want to take the band and what we want to do with it. Everyone is working really hard to try to achieve the goals that we have set for ourselves.

Your sound has also changed a lot over the years. How would you describe your current sound, and where do you see it going in the future?

DH: I think it is going to stay how it is now. We have found our calling, which is the full on metal sound. That's what we feel comfortable doing, and that's what we enjoy playing the most. Pettibone and I come from way more hardcore backgrounds, so there will still be that element to it, but this is what feels right.

JP: It has a trash element to it too. Similar to the classics, like early Testament, or Corrosion. We even have some Crue rock—that dirty, naughty rock, and some hardcore. Basically, the elements of what we all come from. Especially with the new guys that have been added, I am excited to see what they are going come up with, and what we are going to accomplish.

Your earlier hardcore bands, and especially Trial, had a

heavy political message, as did early Himsa. What has been changed lyrically from your earlier days?

DH: That has all changed because of different singers.

JP: I've never really been a political writer or speaker on the stage. I feel that everyone has their own opinions, but most of the time the kids in the crowd probably have the same opinions that I do, so I would be preaching to the converted. Politics have never been a big thing for me. I would rather speak on topics and elements that anyone can figure out, and adapt to their own life. I hear a lot of kids say, "Your lyrics really help me out". It helps me, because I get to get all of that energy out, and helps me focus in life. If a kid understands what I am saying, and it helps him out in some way, then I have accomplished something. Even though it's not political, I am still trying to get a change out of people, even though everything is personal.

Along with the lyrics, the band has a dark and evil theme. How much of that is for show, or is a reflection of your personalities?

DH: I am creepy. I am super creepy and old.
JP: It's not really one theme were going for. We wear black clothes, because that's what we are comfortable in, and you don't have to do laundry all the time. We are all old horror fans and movie buffs. We are also just into the darker side of life. Today's world is not happy go lucky. It's a pretty fucked up place. We can be the soundtrack for that. With the way the bands look on stage and everything else, it's just an element that ties it all together. Himsa is more then just a band. We want kids to get involved at shows, and feel like they are part of the band through our fan club. We don't want to be a band that is just seen on stage. We want to try to have a voice for the kids, and let them know that they can do the same things we do. I don't think of it as imagery or a theme, its just who we are.

DH: I heart Cannibal Corpse.

JP: That's why he is so creepy.

DH: I love fucked up shit like that. "Hammer Smashed Face" and "Fucked With A Knife."

"Today's world is not happy go lucky. It's a pretty fucked up place. We can be the soundtrack for that."

If you were super villains, who would you be and who would you terrorize?

DH: Lenny Kravitz. I hate that guy. I would be a ball of fury... and hair. I would make him choke on hair balls.

JP: I would be like Bizaro Batman, and I would rip out the entrails of Fred Durst. Even though he is out of the limelight now, he is still a fucking douche bag. He should quit.

DH: He and Vanilla Ice should bro down.

JP: Yeah. Vanilla Ice toured with Skarhead and got beat up.

Give some more details on how your fights with these rock stars would go.

JP: The fight would end with my hand pulling out his entrails.

DH: I would chop him in half with one of those ninja swords from Kill Bill, and then I would spit and stomp on him with my steel-toed boots. It would be complete nonsense and craziness. I really don't like that guy. He only writes music for commercials, and there is no heart in it. He just thinks he is so cool.

JP: And he is dating that hot 19 year old Brazilian Victoria Secret model. That guy should die.

Anything you want to say in closing?

JP: Check out our web site www.himsa.org It will always tell you when we are on tour, and what's going on.

DH: It's pretty easy for kids to reach us. We are approachable as people. We love it when people bring us Starbucks Cards. Come to a show. Come say hi. Check out our record.

Yeah... 



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BLINK 182



"YOU KNOW WHAT, WE WANT TO DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT."

Q&A with BLINK 182's Tom DeLonge

By Don Sill

Growing up is inevitable. People grow up, mature and evolve, it's a simple revelation really. So why is this so surprising to so many people that Blink 182, whose members are now pushing 30, have grown up? Since their latest, self-titled album dropped last November everyone has seemed awed by Blink's deeper, moody song cycle about love and codependence as if the trio were somehow incapable of maturing beyond wedgies and spitballs.

But, to evolve is key to any artist and Blink 182 are no exception. They fearlessly took chances and different approaches on this album and gave themselves the freedom to explore a new voice beyond high school and into adulthood. AMP spoke with Blink's Tom DeLonge about finally growing up.

When your last record dropped, everyone kept saying how much Blink 182 grew up. Why was everyone so shocked that you guys grew up or

matured?

[Laughs] I don't know...I think we were shocked. [Laughs] I think it has to do with a few different things. I mean, it has to do with who we are and how

we always ran our band and we always said, "fuck, we don't wanna grow up!" and whatever. Then one day we were like, "you know what, we want to do something different." We wanted to play our songs differently and we're sick of just fucking around and we're sick of making all of our records so quickly for the labels to put them out. So, this time we decided to everything different. We wanted to make it as art inspired as it is personality inspired. Then what happened was it became a massive art project in a laboratory that we set up in somebody's house. We got so into it that it came out good and exceeded what people expectations were for our band and

that's inevitably what we needed to do in order to get noticed all over again...I don't know, I guess it worked.

It was a bold step and a new direction for you guys. Kinda like how Jim Carrey and Robin Williams have that range to go from comedy to drama.

Isn't it weird that the comedic actors always end up being the greatest actors. Like Tom Hanks and Robin Williams. Those guys do the best movies and get all the Oscars and do the funniest movies and get all the laughs. It's funny that you say that because I've never thought of it like that with music, but that would be cool if we could be like that. Do all



this serious moody stuff and also have a lot of fun and be ridiculous if we wanna be. **And that's the freedom you have made for yourselves. The freedom to have that range.**

You know what, I think that's true. We've always felt we had the freedom to do whatever the fuck we wanted to and if we're gonna fuck up in front of 20 thousand people we'd say, "you know what? We suck!" and we'd start all over again. We didn't find any harm in that. We were so sick of people trying to act bigger, better and cooler than everybody else that we never took that route. We just did what we wanted to and half of them will probably hate us and half of us will maybe like us, so who cares. Lets just do what we wanna do and that has created a lot of freedom, I think.

You and Mark are both married with children. Pushing 30-

Yeah, I'm 28, Mark's 31, and Travis is 28. We all have kids and we're all married...well Travis will be married in a few months. But, we're all pretty

much there now.

How has being married and having children changed your outlook on the world and on your art?

Well, it hasn't really changed any of that because I was a paranoid freak about the world in the first place and I've always been able to separate my music from all the other bullshit that's going on in our lives. Whenever we get all three of us together we just seem to cancel the world out. So, getting married and having kids didn't really change our music. We always took it really seriously and looked at music as an escape. People always think that getting married and having kids changed us, but not at all. I've been with my same lady for over seven years now and this last two years wasn't anything different as far as song writing goes. We were all just at a point where we wanted to challenge ourselves artistically and that was effected because of our family situations. But, having kids can relate things to another common thread. See, as you know, and I know, having kids doesn't

make you feel any different on the inside, you just gotta make better decisions because they'll effect somebody else.


Here you guys are, all these years later. You are now veterans of the pop/punk scene and you've inspired a legion of new bands. How does it feel to be at this place in the music spectrum?

It's rad...I like it. [Laughs] You know, I don't know who we inspire. I know there's some bands that talk about us, but it's cool to be around long enough to prove that you have some kind of value. It's hard when you're a band that starts having success because everyone wants to doubt you and everyone thinks that you're gonna be gone tomorrow and everyone thinks that you're just copying someone else. I mean, when we first came around everyone said we were copying Green Day or something. We wanted to yell out, "We're nothing like Green Day, we don't wanna be like Green Day." That's not even who we listen to, we like better bands and it took us

years to develop and let people know what kind of band we really were and why we're different from everybody else. I feel the same kind of sympathy for the other bands that come out that may find us as an influence and maybe people are pegging them as a Blink 182 knock-off, it's weird. I think that every band really wants to be different and just be what they are and add something new and fresh to the music their own way. On this last record we tried to do that and tried to have this record encompass all of our influences and our whole musical library.

Now that everyone thinks that Blink 182 is a serious, grown-up band can you, with one sentence, change that opinion?

Okay...we did the first two months of recording with a giant screen TV with porn on it for 12-hours a day until the family who owned the house got the first bill. [Laughs] We are the same band; we're just better musicians now.

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By Kristofer Todd Upjohn

“We wanted to “unearth” a new sound in the metal and hardcore world.” So said Trevor Phipps of Uneath, explaining not only the band’s name, but the band’s sound, as well. Coming from Metal Blade, I was a little surprised when I popped this puppy into my CD player and took a listen. Lo and behold, this wasn’t a CD from the newest newest power metal purveyors or death metal demons. It was ... it was ... metalcore? True, it wasn’t just any metalcore, but metalcore it was, indeed. On Metal Blade. Interesting ... given that this is not a genre MB Records typically handles, at least in my experience with the Blade. The facts thus far: It’s a Metal Blade release. The band name sounds like a death metal band. And ...

hey, there are some traces of death influence in the music, as well. What gives?

“Most of us are huge fans of death metal,” Trevor said. “We grew up with bands such as Death, Obituary, Deicide, Carcass, Cannibal Corpse, etc. But we never intended to be a death metal band. We might have a couple of parts that are influenced by the death metal genre, but that is only because we are fans of that music.”

Yeah, but how the hell did you end up on Metal Blade? “With the recent addition and success of As I Lay Dying and Black Dahlia Murder, coupled with Metal Blade’s history, we felt it was the right home for us. The entire staff has treated us like family and

we feel that have found a great home for our music.” Okay, fine. But do you feel your music fits in well with the label’s roster?

“Metal Blade has released hundreds of records in the past 20 years. Not all of the records sound the same, but most are heavy as hell,” Trevor responded. “These guys have a reputation for putting out some of the greatest heavy bands in history, Slayer, King Diamond, Cannibal Corpse, etc. So we feel comfortable being there.”

Being on Metal Blade should open up a wider fan base for Uneath, for multiple reasons. For one thing, Metal Blade is a god among metal labels, and that alone should put Uneath out there on a wider scale. But, given that this band, as Trevor mentioned, grew up touring the hardcore scene on a hardcore label and therefore kicked off its life with



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hardcore listeners, its appearance on Metal Blade should bring them to the ears of some new listeners, some metalheads who maybe haven't heard what's been cooking over on the hardcore side of town.

In fact, from what Trevor said, the widening of the band's fan base is already under way. "Recently it has seemed to open up to other people as well. We see metal kids, hardcore kids, rock kids, and for the most part they all get along, which is great." Obviously, Unerth, though essentially a hardcore act, must have an appeal for all the metal freaks out there. May I again cite Metal Blade's interest? And that appeal would be... help me out, Trevor. "We are a kick ass, heavy as hell band." Short and to the point and- more importantly- very true. Besides just having a widening and apparently varied fan base, Unerth can also boast an interesting array of stage mates, as well. Spending all that time in the hardcore scene hasn't kept the band from performing with some metal-makers. "We have shared the stage with a wide variety of bands from Cephalic Carnage to From Autumn to Ashes, from Burnt by the Sun to In Flames, from Nile to Hatebreed, etc. We are lucky enough to have a sound that a lot of people can grab onto." See above, right?

Anyway, what's really cool about it is that it isn't a deliberate attempt to please all of the people all of the time. It's just sort of a fortunate byproduct of Unerth's creativity. "We don't do this on purpose though. We write what we like. In order for us to play our music night after night on tour, we have to be fans of it. We don't try to please anyone but ourselves." Luckily for them, pleasing themselves is pleasing lots of other people, too. As for variety, if you start digging into Trevor's past a little (no Homeland Security probes here, people, just a few questions

about his listening interests ... no, really, I'm not with the government ..), you'll find a wide spectrum of bands in the what-I-grew-up-listening-to section of Trevor's bio. It was "mostly metal as a young kid (Testament, Sepultura, Pantera, Crowbar, Death, Obituary, Anthrax, etc.). Then, as a teenager, I got into hardcore and crossover stuff like Snapcase, Earth Crisis, Sick of it All ...". And if you really want to get metal on Trevor's hardcore ass, let's just share exactly what got him into the hard shit to begin with, at an early age-even: "I got hooked on heavy stuff in fourth grade when I heard 'Run to the Hills' by Iron Maiden. After that my musical tastes just got more extreme." (He also confessed that, having wanted to be in a band since he was a "little kid", Trevor used to pretend he was in Kiss back when he was 4. He even had an audience. "I would rock out to records in front of my family. I love what I do." He was a wee headbanger in the making!)

One thing that really puts Unerth in tune with hardcore style, besides the music, of course, is the lyrical direction. "I like to cover a wide range of topics, from politics, environmental awareness, religion, personal beliefs, and so on ... Our new record, however, is very heavy on a political theme." OK, but let's take a step back. Of all the music styles out there, why hardcore? "It just happens to be the mix of music we like. We never set out to write a 'metalcore' song. We write songs we like, period." Apparently (see above, again ...) he'd answered that question before I asked it. Prescient metal-core man, isn't he?

Hey, if you really wanna get shocked, guess what style he would do if he wasn't doing metalcore? Well, what style he'd do if he had a time machine, anyway. "I would travel back in time and be in the Beatles."

Whaddya know? More diversity. I suppose at this point nothing should surprise me about Unerth, arguably a very unique band on the metal scene. But that's my opinion.

Okay, it's Trevor's too. 'Cause, see, I wanted to know in HIS opinion what makes Unerth unique. "Everything we do is unique." Thanks for clearing things up. But what about experimentation? Are they going to experiment further in the future? I deserved the answer I got. "We do with every song we write." Fine. We'll leave that alone. Let's go back and take a look at those lyrics again. For some bands, music is music and they play to play. But, again putting themselves in line with the hardcore scene's philosophy, Trevor sees music and its lyrics as a vehicle for change.

"Lyrics are indeed a vehicle for information for people," he explained. "Lyrics are poetry or sometimes even essays written on subjects that deal with a political message, personal agenda, etc. The words are there and there are people that read those words. Hopefully my lyrics will open a few ideas to what is going on in our world today."

The topic of bands as socially relevant covered, Trevor shared with me his philosophy on what bands on today's scene fall into that category: "Any band with something to say besides a sappy love song is cool in my book, even if I disagree with what they are saying. Burnt by the Sun, Buried Inside, At All Cost and many others are examples of bands with a message." In the end, Unerth's success has enabled Trevor to pay it forward. "I run a record label, Ironclad Recordings (www.ironcladrecordings.com). I am trying to help bands that I like with what I have learned in my 12 years in the music business." Way to go, man. Way to go. ➤

RAPID FIRE

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PROFILE: THE FIGHT

By Peewee

NAME:

k8

POSITION IN THE BAND:

Guitar and vocals.

HOMETOWN:

Dudley, WM, U.K

THE FIGHT SOUNDS LIKE:

Exactly what we are - four kids havin' a laugh, and ripping off our favourite bands!

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The CBBC collection - 'specially the tweenies song, Not Katies, McFly and Girls Aloud.

BEST THING TO DO IN THE VAN IS:

Err sleep, listen to tunes, read or laugh at stupid people as they drive by.....

WORST DRIVING INCIDENT INVOLVED:

A squirrel.

DUDLEY HAS INFLUENCED OUR MUSIC IN THE SENSE THAT:

We had to push ourselves harder to make ourselves better so we could get the fuck out...

THE KIDS THESE DAYS ARE:

All on drugs or in a band....

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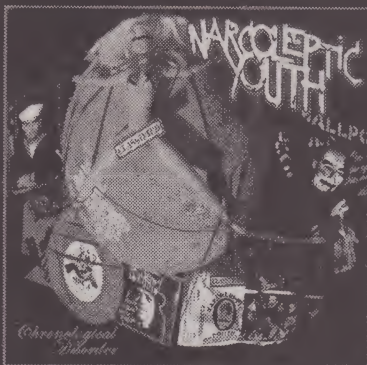
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AL QUINT

SEPTEMBER ENTRY:

I'm a bit pressed for time this month—tomorrow, I leave for Philly for the Pointless Fest. Last year's Pointless Fest was a blast—four straight days of raging punk and hardcore, topped off by the final two shows for Swedish hardcore legends Totalitär and the first east coast appearance of the Texas wrecking crew World Burns To Death. I wrote about it in great detail in my September '03 column and it's still on the website (www.amp-magazine.com.... click under columns). This year's lineup isn't quite as scintillating. There were rumors about Gauze, Infest and others but they didn't pan out. So Disfear, from Sweden, are headlining two of the days and Tragedy another. There are some other bands worth seeing—Bruce Banner, Caustic Christ, Career Suicide, Another Oppressive System, Deadfall, Damage Deposit, Inepsy and a few I'm forgetting right now. I'm skipping the first day. The festival organizers very graciously put all the bands I don't care about—Against Me, World/Inferno Friendship Society and a few others—on the same bill. So it'll be three days of insanity instead of four plus it's not supposed to be as oppressively hot as last summer.

But, yeah, I was debating up until a few days ago whether to go. Just wasn't feeling it. Did I want to drive for 7 hours to see a somewhat weaker lineup? It kind of ties into a general inertia of late, anyway. It's amazing I manage to get this column in on time month after month because that's about the only thing I've been able to do on a consistent basis, besides my radio show, which is my main source of musical enjoyment these days (besides the live shows). I'm so far behind on everything with my own zine—a shelf of review CD's, a box of 7"s, a pile of books and zines still to get to and I don't feel the energy or inclination to deal with a lot of it. I haven't transcribed ONE interview in a year now. Don't be surprised if, when I finally publish, it's in a somewhat different format and some of the out of date stuff gets thrown on a website of some sort. I put in the effort, people took the time to send stuff and that work shouldn't disappear. But I want a fresh start. Perhaps a smaller page count, more selective review section, maybe more emphasis on photos.

Since I got my digital camera, I've been taking a shitload of photos at shows and that's another thing I enjoy. Even with the delay on that type of camera, I think I'm getting pretty good at it. The photos that accompany this column were taken on that camera by yours truly and it does make things easier. Cheaper, too. I like sharing those photos—sure, there's a controversy over digital photography, much in the same way there's the vinyl vs. CD debate. Purists like film. I'm not throwing away my film camera. I don't even know enough about photography to tell you if there really is a difference but I like the instant gratification of it. And having the ability to share those photos with whoever wants them. I'm starting to see my stuff on websites, record covers, etc. And I don't ask for anything in return (except a copy of whatever it's used for). I'm flattered that they think my photos are good enough to use. It was kind of cool to see one of my photos, albeit in a manipulated form, used for a large, hand-screened gig poster. When I get around to it, it's going to occupy a nice spot in my rock 'n roll bathroom—the same place where I have my autographed photos of Iron Maiden and Grim Reaper, an autographed Megadeth flat and a few other items.

Back to that inertia, though. Maybe it's lingering depression over personal losses the past few years. Maybe it's me becoming a bit old and jaded. Not completely but it's easy when there's a whirlwind of bad promo CD's, publicists bugging me to interview bands I have zero interest in interviewing, etc. So little inspires me and it makes it more difficult to make time for the stuff that does inspire. I'm even having difficulty keeping up with the music I enjoy. I have records sitting in that review box that I like, that I've played on the radio a num-

ber of times but haven't gotten it together to write reviews.

I'm also talking, to an extent, about this feeling of alienation I have, in all aspects of my life. Lots of acquaintances, not enough friends. There are just too few people I want to associate with (and I'm sure it's mutual, as I'm rather difficult); only a handful of folks with whom I feel a kinship—people who understand my thought processes, sense of humor, musical and sports passions. My true friends are spread out and I don't get a chance to see them enough. One friend just moved back home, 800 miles away, and I miss her terribly (as does Ellen—she's a dear friend to both of us).

Even in the punk scene—the same bullshit scene politics for the past 20 years. And maybe I do feel the age gap because there ain't too many people in my age range in the Boston DIY punk scene, although I still tend to like being around younger people than folks my own age. I don't want to go to bar shows, unless it's something worthwhile.

Last weekend, Ellen and I went to a barbecue at a childhood friend's house and didn't know anyone there, except for a few people. These are people I have ZERO in common with—these are affluent, settled people with careers and kids and that dominates the conversation. I suppose you could say I'm comfortably middle class, myself, but that's the only commonality. Otherwise, I don't want to fucking *know* these people. I felt absolutely invisible at that party and the only saving grace was playing wiffle ball with the kids in the front yard. Fun, even though I jammed my ankle a bit trying to leg out a hit (there's that age thing again). Don't think I'll be going to another one of those parties anytime soon.

Back to my work, though, I never thought I'd reach the burnout stage. It just feels like a big hole right now. I'm trying to get out of it. I may have to shed a lot of the excess baggage in the process but I'm working towards it.

But I decided to go to Philly anyway. There are people there I want to see. I have a nice place to stay (with my cousin). I know I'll enjoy quite a few of the bands. I had a nice kick in the ass over the past week by seeing a pair of fun shows at a new basement space in Somerville cleverly called Bloodstains Across Somerville. One of the shows was with Damage Deposit, from Minneapolis, along with four local hardcore punk bands. The show was thrown together at the last minute (Damage Deposit's other show fell through) and there was still a good turnout. Those kinds of shows do chase the jaded feelings away, although I still thought of that song "But After The Gig" by Discharge while driving home alone. The title more than the actual lyrics which I could never really make out, anyway—much in the same way I finally discovered, after 20 years, the chorus to "Always Restrictions" goes "smash to fuck the fuckin' system," helpful when I sing along with Solitary Neglect's cover of that song. Granted, I was invited to go play laser tag with some of the kids after the show. Maybe I'll take them up on it next time. A few nights later, Bruce Banner, from Sweden (see CD review below) and Deadfall, from the Bay Area, stormed through and left a thrashing mass in their wake, accompanied by Sleeper Cell, who just did a cross-country tour and sounded absolutely ripping, as well as a couple of cool thrash bands from the northern 'burbs, the aforementioned Solitary Neglect and Kirottu (who play Finnish hardcore and *sing* in Finnish (supposedly—the singer does have a ranty voice so who knows). I've said it before but those kind of shows keep me going, even when I feel somewhat excluded from the socializing. 'Cause, like I said, I have few friends.

No more psychological navel-gazing. Sorry to be self-indulgent. I hope this serves as something of an answer to those who are curious as to why it's taking so long for me to get things going again with my own work.

I DID manage to write reviews of some records, this month. Dig in...

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SLEEPER CELL-EP

Sleeper Cell actually have two 7" EP's out at the moment, this one on Cries of Pain and one on Partners In Crime that I didn't get in time for this column (they sold out of it on tour). One of the best bands to emerge in Boston in the last few years; thing is, none of 'em are Boston natives—they all moved here from other states and played in such bands as Self Defense, Balance of Terror, Tear It Up and Crucial Unit. Raw, high energy songs with a strong political bent. Some Dis- and Swedish influences in there, but I'm also reminded of the flailing intensity of the late, great Talk Is Poison (some of you Bay Area people should remember them). In any case, I've also heard the tracks from the other EP and they're both worth checking out. (Cries of Pain, PO Box 1004, Windsor, CT 06095, criesofpainrecs@hotmail.com)

**WRECKAGE-This is America EP**

And speaking of folks who used to be in Balance of Terror and Self-Defense, there are people from both in this NYC-based band (or were—their drummer Chris quit, recently). A vinyl pressing of their 2003 demo and, as with Sleeper Cell, the songs are hard and fast and tread similar territory, although there's a bit more noodly (but not excessive) lead guitar work. (Busted Heads, www.bustedheads.com)

BULLET TREATMENT/SHELL SHOCK-Split EP

West coast band, east coast band, both of 'em playing tuneful AND ripping hardcore punk. Bullet Treatment embrace a bit of youth crew and bit of Minor Threat and have a stirring urgency on their pair of tracks. Shell Shock are from Long Island and have a similar sound to Kill Your Idols—anger in the vocals but the riffs are catchy as fuck. (Puke 'n Vomit, PO Box 3435, Fullerton, CA 92834)

RAT BASTARDS EP

Boiling over and explosive—the first new Rat Bastards release since their late 90s album—too long a stretch! Some lineup changes (including a different vocalist) but time hasn't slowed 'em. The Bastards sound just as pissed-off as ever. A steel-cage match between raw d-beat hardcore and Poison Idea and the blood, sweat and power chords fly off the motherfucking rails. They've got another batch of songs in the can that are just as good as the tracks on this EP so prepare for more battering. (Kangaroo Records, see address above)

I OBJECT-self-titled I OBJECT/FOREVER YOUTH-split EP

First two vinyl releases, after several demos and lineup shifts, for I Object, who come from western New York state. Posi-core, but not the macho, boys-club variety—first off, the vocalist ain't no boy, it's a woman named Barb and she has a pointed, in-your-face style. The lyrics are personal and heart-on-sleeve, without getting all emo. Human and vulnerable but expressed with confidence. A good mix of speed and floorpunching breakdowns and circle pit parts and keeping the punk in there along with the hardcore. The split with Forever Youth starts with the crushing "Logic," which lumbers along until a blazing conclusion. I Object have come a long way in a few years, especially live. Forever Youth have more of a double-speed hardcore/grind sound that is raw and energetic, although a tad generic-sounding. (Punx Before Profits, 209 Center St., Olean, NY 14760, www.punksbeforeprofits.com)

**DIRECT CONTROL EP**

This is one of my favorite 7"s of the past few months. It's just about fucking perfect. Brandon Ferrell used to be the drummer for Richmond thrash/crossover crazies Municipal Waste. Here, he handles guitar and vocals (and bass on the recording) and the sound is buzzsaw, old-school hardcore and some skate punk thrown in for good measure ("Payday"). "Hardcore For Heroin" has a faux-38 Special intro, before getting down to slammin' business. Lyrics deal with drug addiction, religion and government issues—standard fare but just showing that it still has relevance in 2004, much as it did in 1984. Completely ass-kicking. (Kangaroo Records, Middenweg 13, 1098 AA Amsterdam, HOLLAND, <http://www.geocities.com/tysonkangaroo>)

REGRESS-Look Who's Pulling The Strings EP

I was writing earlier about there not being enough over-30 DIY punks where I live, and that's especially true with bands. So it's awesome to have a band with three guys who have all passed that milestone. It's even more awesome when they sound as though they have the same passion as people half their age. Regress, from Chicago, have quite the pedigree—Joe Losurdo was in Life Sentence, Anthony Illarde was in Rights Of The Accused and Chopper Stepe was in Negative Element (come on—you remember their classic "Whatever Happened To Elmer Fudd"—ok, maybe not). The band's second 7" and Regress is probably an accurate name because they're going back to what they know, which is angry, fast hardcore punk but it sounds genuine and sincere. Still pissed at the world and using music as a tool to express it in short, blazing sound bites. (Lengua Armada,

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1010 1/2 Riverine Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92701,
martincrudo@yahoo.com)

BRUCE BANNER-I've Had It With Humanity CD

They've had it with humanity, racists, old bands reuniting, US aggression and self-pitying whiners (maybe I'll fall into that category after this column). With the addition of Christoffer (aka Bobo aka 138)

from DS-13 and ETA as co-vocalist, Stockholm's Bruce Banner have put together a fierce album and it's their best effort to date. Pillaging hardcore, sometimes done double-speed, sometimes following more of a d-beat mood, sometimes going for the plodding mantra ("Support Our Troops Or Else"). Even a wacked-out Joy Division cover ("Interzone").

Hitting high and low in the vocal department, as Per's shrieks are countered by Christoffer's lower-register emanations and reinforced with razor-sharp riffs, jabbing bass and powerful drumming. (Busted Heads, www.bustedheads.com)

**LOS CRUDOS/MK-ULTRA-Split EP**

Unreleased songs by both long-gone Chicago bands (third Chicago entry in a row in this column—and I didn't even get to the ripping Non-Fiktion Nois 7" this time). Same drummer, in fact—Ebro, who is currently the vocalist for Punch In The Face. Crudos shouldn't need much introduction but, just in case, a very important band from the 90s, not only for the burgeoning Latino hardcore punk community but for the DIY scene, period and their influence will be felt for a long time. Recorded in '98, around the time of their split and these are four fast, manic blasts that don't sound like outtakes. MK-Ultra also relied on brute thrash speed and a howling vocalist (Frank, now with Fourteen or Fight) and are one of the more underrated bands from that period. Lethal. (Lengua Armada, same address as above)

Jaded or not, I'm still up for hearing any ripping hardcore, punk, garage or rock 'n roll you want to send for review here, in my zine *Suburban Voice* or for play on my radio show Sonic Overload (<http://sonicoverload.moocowrecords.com>). Send it here: Al Quint/PO Box 2746/Lynn, MA 01903/e-mail: suburban-voice@earthlink.net... ☐

OCTOBER ENTRY:

I know this is mainly a punk 'zine, so I'm preaching to the converted but would someone please explain the appeal of Jimmy Buffett to me? It's the second weekend in September and Boston is being invaded by so-called Parrotheads. I'm just glad I don't have any plans to go into the city for the next few days. I guess it's the old Grateful Dead caveat. If you weren't stoned, you would realize how bad the music is. Same with Buffett. Does anyone listen to this crap sober? What sickens me more is that one of the retrograde right-wing sports radio hosts I listen to from time to time absolutely loves this shit. He'll talk about how well-behaved this crowd is compared to that 'angry rock' crowd. That they're drunks but 'happy drunks.' I fit the demographic—middle-aged, white, paunchy but if I ever start listening to that crap, please kill me. If I ever start wearing sandals in public or those hideous Tommy Bahama shirts or whatever the fuck they're called, the same rule applies. Because it means I've gone insane and a merciful termination would be best for everyone.

So, yeah, it's the second week of September, the day before the third anniversary of 9/11 as I type this. It's a calm, sunny beautiful day here in New England, just like on that day. An eerie calm. I don't even see as much of the blatant flag-waving this year—not as many of 'em festooning car aerials although the "God Bless America" bumperstickers have become a part of the landscape. Of course, I'm in avoidance mode. Trying to not watch TV or listen to news reports. I don't need to see the footage again to be reminded. I know that changed everything forever. Things have *definitely* changed in the past three years. Not for the better, either, in my opinion and I've expressed that ad-infinitum. So my comments will be brief. The Republicans continue to exploit the terror card. Vice President Cheney as much as said this week that if you vote for Kerry, you're voting for terrorism. Here's what he said, quoted in numerous newspaper accounts, during a campaign stop in Iowa: "It's absolutely essential that eight weeks from today, on Nov. 2, we make the right choice, because if we make the wrong choice then the danger is that we'll get hit again and we'll be hit in a way that will be devastating from the standpoint of the United States."

Today, Cheney is attempting to backpedal on those statements, saying he didn't mean to imply that if Kerry gets elected, the US will be attacked. He told the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, "I did not say if Kerry is elected, we will be hit by a terrorist attack... Whoever is elected president has to anticipate more attacks." Sounds similar to the same so-called flip-flops of which Kerry has been accused during this campaign. I don't think there's any missing the point of the original statement but, as the shit hit the fan, Cheney backed down. Didn't admit a mistake or apologize but 'clarified.' Uh-huh....

I also attempted to ignore the Republican convention as much as possible. The convention itself, that is. I did hear about Democratic Senator Zell Miller's hate-filled speech (hatred towards Democrats, basically) and caught the clip of his argument with MSNBC's "Hardball" host Chris Matthews. For those who don't know, Miller is a Democrat in name only. He's an extreme right-winger and has a rather sketchy history, having once served as Lt. Governor under racist Governor Lester Maddox, a man who refused to desegregate a restaurant he owned. According to the *New Georgia Encyclopedia*, "On July 3, 1964, Maddox and a throng of supporters wielding axe handles, forcibly turned away three black activists." Maddox never fully

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expressed regret for his segregationist beliefs, either. Miller, to his credit, did express regret for not supporting civil rights in the 60s and did lead a move to remove the confederate flag from the Georgia flag. Still, Rep. John Lewis, a 1960s civil rights leader, called Bush's appearance at the convention "a shame and a disgrace."

I also heard about Ah-nuld Schwarzenegger's girly-man redux comments at the convention and saw a snippet of the dim-bulb Bush twins. Definitely not ready for prime time. All I could think of was that old "Delta Delta Delta" sketch on Saturday Night Live.

I did, however, pay attention to what was going on outside the convention. I kept up with those events through IndyMedia.org, Free Speech Radio News and Air America Radio—all of them progressive alternatives to the right-leaning corporate media and a nice rejoinder to the fawning coverage that Bush received from those outlets. Our local alternative paper, the *Boston Phoenix*, had some excellent blogging and articles. The Village Voice also provided an alternate point of view about events both inside and outside the convention. Sure, these types of alternative media have their own biases and, as always, nothing should be taken at face value. But the fact remains that hundreds of thousands of demonstrators came from around the country to express their disgust with Bush and the Re-thuglicans. I heard about the police roundups (1800 arrests during the week) and illegal detainment at what came to be referred to as "Guantanamo On The Hudson." The Village Voice reported, "but now comes the familiar litany of stories of abuse in jail, people denied access to lawyers, locked up for no reason or held for unnecessarily long stays. Bails have gone as high as \$200,000 (for the kid nabbed during Sunday's puppet burning incident), while protesters are being taken to the hospital for skin reactions and asthma attacks from the chemicals and diesel soaked into the concrete floor at the Pier 57 detention center, a former bus depot, where reports are that as many as 40 protesters at a time had been crammed into the 10' by 20' pens covered in wire mesh."

America... land of the free? Give me a fucking break. Let's hope that those responsible for enforcing a virtual police state are made to pay big-time. No, I'm talking about overthrowing the government (well, overthrowing Bush through the ballot-box is fine with me) but that they're compensated financially. Sue the motherfuckers!!

Time for the review section. First, a movie review. The second one I've attempted in this column (the first being Michael Moore's *Fahrenheit 911*). Much to my surprise, I got invited to the area screening for the new Ramones documentary *End Of The Century* (produced and directed by Michael Gramaglia and Jim Fields). Should I be so trite as to say 'thumbs up'? That's what my friend who accompanied me said. He's a recent convert to the Ramones, finally discovering the early punk stuff he largely dismissed more than 25 years ago. Of course, he thinks he's cool now that he sports a Clash t-shirt instead of his usual Alice Cooper or AC/DC gear. Sigh. I guess I need to make him that mix CD of all the bands from back then who escaped his notice, including many bands I like a lot more than the Ramones.

But I do love the Ramones and enjoyed this movie. They certainly did have a hand in starting what we call punk, after all. The story is done in more or less chronological order, interspersing segments with all the band's members—in addition to the four originals, there are snippets with Marky, Richie and Clem Burke, plus latter-day bassist CJ, friends, relatives, managers, producers and confidants. Appearances are made by other luminaries

from the early New York scene, as well as the by-now-standard tributes from contemporary alt-rock 'gods' such as Eddie Vedder and Lars from Rancid. Not Henry Rollins, though. Isn't there some kind of rule that Rollins has to appear in every music documentary? I mean, I can't recall a VH1 program where he *hasn't* appeared to offer his astute (cough) analysis. There's also a clip with Joe Strummer, just before his untimely death, where he recalls first meeting the Ramones when they went to England in 1976 and found a welcoming audience.

The movie is an often-revealing look at the band's history, telling the story of how four mismatched guys ended up getting together in Forest Hills, Queens in the early 70s and (cue dramatic sound here) made rock 'n roll history. Sure, it's kind of *Behind The Music*-esque, except there's not some cheesy narrator. It's not a glossed-over treatment, either. I'm sure some details are left out but the members' imperfections, their humanity, are made visible. Joey is the shy, gawky obsessive compulsive. Dee Dee is the druggo/hustling scuzzball who emerges as a combination pathetic/sympathetic figure, the ravages of his hard lifestyle readily apparent in his physical mannerisms and somewhat disjointed comments. Watching his interview segments are often painful, with the years of excess clearly having taken their toll. Tommy is the articulate drummer and skilled engineer/producer who really didn't seem to fit in. Johnny was the hard-nosed businessman and ass-kicker and he comes across as far from likeable. But these disparate individuals sure as hell created something memorable.

With those conflicting personalities, there was obviously friction from the beginning—a live clip at CBGB shows them arguing over what song to play. Joey and Johnny were also polar opposites, not only in terms of personality but also politically—Joey being a left-leaning type and Johnny a hard-core right-winger. But the real nub of their acrimony comes down to a love triangle—Johnny steals away Joey's girlfriend and marries her. Joey retaliates by writing "The KKK Took My Baby Away" in response to that episode. The two never reconciled after that and basically weren't on speaking terms for the remaining decade and a half of the band's existence.

The main emphasis is on the band in the 70s—including more ass-kicking live footage—up until the recording of their fifth album, "End Of The Century," their highly-flawed effort with genius/madman producer Phil Spector. That episode is told in full detail. It was the Ramones' attempt at a commercial breakthrough and that didn't pan out. At that point, Johnny realized that they'd probably never be more than a cult item, at least in the US and they should stick with what they know, playing more or less straight-ahead punk rock and not try to become pop stars. After that, there were the inevitable personnel changes—Marky had already come on board for "Road To Ruin, left in the early 80s and then came back. Dee Dee left in the late 80s, initially for an ill-advised rap career. The video clip of his hip-hop performance is worth the price of admission, alone—it's surreal, to say the least. Eventually the band split and go their separate ways, until they appear together one last time (sans Joey, who had died the year before) at their induction into the Rock and Roll Hall Of Fame—and it's only a few months before Dee Dee's passing. He thanks himself and pats himself on the back. Needless to say, there's bitterness not far below the surface. In one of the last shots, he's seen wandering down the hall leaving a party after the induction, as a subtitle announces his demise—a poignant moment.

End Of The Century provides what one wants in a rock documentary—finding out stuff you didn't know before, getting a feel for the personalities who made the music, putting things in context and memorable live performances. While I wish there had been a bit

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more of the latter, this is still a well-conceived accounting of an iconic band.

.... on to this month's selections of records....

BOXED IN—self-titled LP

High-powered hardcore from UK band Boxed In, following a pair of 7" EPs. Manic tirades with a whirlwind of guitar/bass/drums clamor and vocals struggling to be heard over the fray. Not too happy with the state of the world—"Too Many Dead," for instance, discusses the inevitable deaths of innocent civilians (aka 'collateral damage') during warfare and that's certainly been the case in Iraq, to name one recent conflict. Musically, inspired by the likes of Siege and UK forebears Heresy, Ripcord, etc. Almost all fast 'n' ripping, except for the closing track "They Live Again," starting with a quote from the movie with Rowdy Roddy Piper and played at a sturdy, heavy pace and the effect is crunching. Aural devastation. (Crime Scene, Box 13, 82 Colston Street, Bristol BS1 5BB, UK, www.crimescenerecords.co.uk)

VICTIMS—In Blood LP

Victims' "Neverendinglasting" LP remains their best effort to date, but this album is a bounceback after their just-OK songs on the split with From Ashes Rise.

Contemporary Swedish hardcore, offering a generous dose of Discharge-meets-Motörhead mania. Not ultra-fast but rumbling along at a healthy clip, although "Min Enda Resa" blazes with merciless power. Thick guitar riffing, unafraid to show the occasional bit of metallic flash. "Swallow Poison" follows that motif to letter-perfect effect. "No Regrets" shows a slightly

doomier side. Victims' lyrics aren't overtly political—it's more of a personal expression of angst and despair, to generalize a bit, but there are some wider-ranging themes, as well. Blood is drawn. (PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.havocrex.com)

PLAN OF ATTACK—The Working Dead CD

Aggressive and energetic hardcore—a progression from Plan Of Attack's 7" (which also kicked ass) in terms of playing and production, without losing their way. The songs are direct, both

musically and lyrically, honing a sound akin to Kill Your Idols without quite as much of the melody (it finally dawns on me that Bill sounds kind of like Andy West). They're not afraid to puncture sacred cows (pun kind of intended)—"The Shepherd Returns (When The Sheep Won't Follow)" is a thinly-veiled commentary about the return of certain krishna-core hardcore heroes and it's not too positive a commentary. "Paper Revolutionary" takes aim at activists who preach slogans but don't have the knowledge to back it up—which isn't *always* the case, since activism and hardcore/punk have long gone hand in hand in certain quarters, despite what some may say. The Sean Taggart artwork takes me back to the 80s and Plan Of Attack certainly embrace the hardcore sounds from that decade—but they're the *right* sounds, a good blend of metal-free hardcore and punk anger. (Organized Crime, PO Box 213, Brookfield, IL 60513, www.organizedcrimerecords.com)

SHEMPS—Spazz Out CD

Irresistible garage/punk/rock 'n' roll from this NYC band. Yeah, I know what you're thinking—another trendoid band but, trust me, that ain't true. The Shemps are legit—guitarist Dave Wilentz was playing out the powerchords for the Stallions long before the Strokes and the other johnny-come-latelys made the jaunt to the Rotten Apple. Vocalist Artie Phillie has mainly loaned his tonsils to hardcore bands but he makes the successful transition to soulful yowler here. Bassist Bill Florio used to play in the obnoxious Bugout Society and writes an obnoxious column in MRR. OK, maybe that ain't cred. Work with me here. Anyway, the Shemps take those 60s influences and rough 'em up and rock the fuck out without the slightest hint of pretense. It's loose, it's fun and you don't have to be one of the 'beautiful people' to participate. (Reservation, 7101 SE Reed College Place, Portland, OR 97202, www.rezrecs.com)

WARCRY—Maniacs On Pedestals LP

Side project for Todd Burdette from Tragedy/Deathreap/etc, etc (I think they're trying not to advertise that fact, so you didn't hear it from me) and, essentially, another tribute to his and his compatriots' Dis-obsession. Add in a few Swedish hardcore influences, as well. Not quite as ripping as Funeral, for which Todd played drums, but Warcry have the sound down pat. Bumpy-bump drumming, big powerchords and hoarse vocals. Three-chord blaze, tightly structured and hitting the mark. (Feral Ward, www.feralward.com)

LA PESTE—V.2.0 CD

Some of you Killed By Death aficionados may be familiar with the early Boston punk band LaPeste through their "Better Off Dead" single, which also appeared on the (incomplete) anthology that came out on Matador in the mid-90s (the song also appeared on the Rhino anthology "Mass. Ave"). After original vocalist/guitarist Peter Dayton left the band, the remaining two members—Mark Andreasson (bass) and the late Roger Tripp (drums) re-grouped with Ian Kalinosky taking over on guitar. Some demo songs made their way to the college airwaves, they played live on WERS in Boston—their fall 1980 set was released as a bootleg LP—and two songs appeared on the compilation "A Wicked Good Time." This disc compiles 19 previously unreleased songs recorded in 1980 and sticks to the same minimalist punk sound that the original lineup pursued. Brief, catchy songs with buzzing guitar, throbbing bass and a strong backbeat—Ian and bassist Mark split the vocals and, in all honesty, Mark's turns at the mike are somewhat weaker than Ian's. The tunes were solid—"Acid Test" was a holdover from the Dayton era, while "Lease On Life," "Odd Man" and "My Eyes" hold their own



KAMIKAZE-Seppuku 7" EP

SNAKE BITE-Feel The Buzz 7" EP

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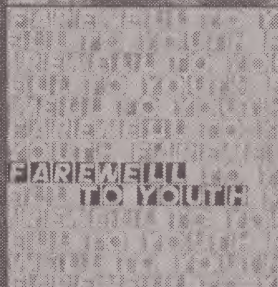
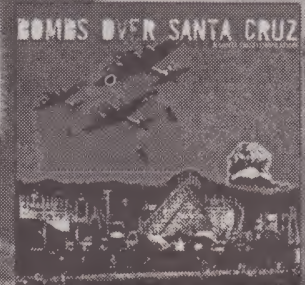
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[illegible]

Los Dryheavers
"Hangups,
Heartaches and
Hangovers"
UR009



Here Kitty Kitty
"This is Broken"
LR008

THE PALE



By Joel Hartse

Imagine: you win fifty million dollars in the lottery, but a week later find out that what you won was fifty million dollars *Canadian*. I bring this up as an analogy about being promised an interview with a cool band and later realizing that all they've given you is the drummer. Let's say it's the Beatles, and at this point perhaps a vision of sharing drinks with, say, John and Paul, has formed in a writer's brain—but Ringo is the only one who shows up. Sure, it's still exciting (you can always talk about, uh, his rings), but not quite the same. Surely the drummer is the most invisible, replaceable member of the band who couldn't possibly have anything worthwhile to say.

Unless the drummer happens to be someone like Greg Swinehart of the up-and-coming Northwest power-popsters the Pale, of course. Whether expounding on the greatness of Daniel Lanois as a producer or commenting on the Pale's Gabe Archer's cuteness ("I see him all the time, and I don't get tired of looking at him," he admits), Swinehart has a lot to say. And far from being replaceable, Swinehart is an integral part of the Pale, both as a drummer and as one of the human beings who makes the band what it is.

The Pale's story, like its music, is unabashedly positive: hardworking local band from small town makes good. Hailing from Bellingham, Washington (also the original home of fellow pop masters the Posies and Death Cab For Cutie, two bands to whom the Pale is often favorably—and legitimately, even on musical terms—compared). Their third self-produced album, *Gravity Gets Things Done*, belies the band's rainy hometown: it's crisp and sunny, with hooks and harmonies in all the right places. Singer, songwriter, guitarist, and Rhodes player Archer has a warm, earnest voice and a penchant for writing wide-eyed lyrics like "I hope that you're okay" and "you got me singing all my songs for the first time." His vocals seem to exude comfort and love, even when he's singing the sar-

castic "We Never Fight or Disagree" about a superficial relationship. Backed by Cam Nicklaus on guitar, Lance Fisher on bass and Swinehart's solid beats, Archer's songs are fleshed out with an exuberance characteristic of classic 60's pop.

Gravity is a portrait of a young band at its energetic best, which may be one of the reasons that the Pale attracted a slew of record labels when it became clear that *Gravity* would demand a national release. Rather than an overnight success story, Swinehart describes the Pale's past year as a series of baby steps.

"When we got on KEXP [Seattle's premier independent radio station], that's when we could start getting shows in Seattle," Swinehart said. "When we got played on the End [107.7, Seattle's mainstream rock station], then we started getting calls from major labels...and then when we got on Star 101.5 [Seattle's very mainstream pop station], that's when like both NY and LA were calling."

Although he called being played on a pop station "in between John Mayer and Matchbox 20" a "strange" experience, Swinehart says that the band's recent signing to independent label SideCho Records doesn't feel like an unnatural change from micro-indie status. "It feels really natural, because there have been so many small

steps leading up to this," he said. It just feels like it's happening at the right time. I don't know if I'll ever feel like we're past the baby step stage...every place we go it's going to be like starting over—forever, I'm sure."

An integral part of the Pale's sound is the production of Nicklaus, who is both a recording whiz and a natural when it comes to riffs. Archer may have the melodies and looks, but Nicklaus has hooks like crazy; somehow he often manages to squeeze no fewer than three instantly memorable guitar lines into a song. "Cam comes from a huge musical background," said Swinehart. "He's related to one of the guys from the Kingsmen. His dad built a studio back in the day for...\$50,000 or something. They had to put the 8-track together track-by-track or something—just old school. So it's kind of in Cam's blood to just build a studio."

Which is what he did, and since 1994 the Pale—in one incarnation or another—has been recording their own material. Although Swinehart is quick to make a list of dream producers (Lanois, Nigel Godrich, Tchad Blake), it's worth noting that the Pale's do-it-yourself ethos—from recording to Swinehart's own graphic design on the new record—has not failed them yet. Whether their newly-signed status results in wide acclaim or not, the Pale can and will keep doing what they do.

"I was planning to get my master's in counseling," said Swinehart. "And I realized...I'm going to be doing the band anyway. All of us realized that we're going to be doing it anyway. That's why there wasn't really a threat to not getting a record deal. We're going to be releasing records." So they might as well go for it. And they have, and so far it works. This may not be the type of "stay-in-school" crap that people like to hear, but knowing that the Pale has this attitude about their music—that it's important enough to keep making, no matter what—is much more inspirational anyway. ☺

NEUROSIS



Illustration By Josh Barker

**"We just wanted to stop screaming.
If people don't like it, too bad..."**

—Steve von Till

By Jeff Halldorson

Screaming is something this band has excelled at in their nineteen year existence. However, even the Oakland quintet realized that maybe it was time to put on the brakes. As evidenced in the late 2003 NEUROSIS/JARBOE collaboration, (Neurot Recordings,) the apocalyptic legends let The Swans' female mainstay do their screaming for them. Calling the album 'psychedelic' would be one way to put it, or as von Till stated, "There's heaviness, but the heaviness isn't necessarily derived from the guitars." Jarboe's vocals, to be frank, give Linda Blair's Regan character from The Exorcist a run for her money, with plenty of guttural howls.

This Summer, though, 'The Eye of Every Storm,' the band's eighth official album will be released on their own Neurot label. Much of the new disc was recorded in Chicago with Steve Albini, at Electrical Audio. This is the fourth record the legendary engineer has worked on with the group since 1999's 'Times of Grace.'

Neurosis is almost like the modern equivalent of the legendary Black Flag. Their early offerings provided the listener with up-tempo velocities.

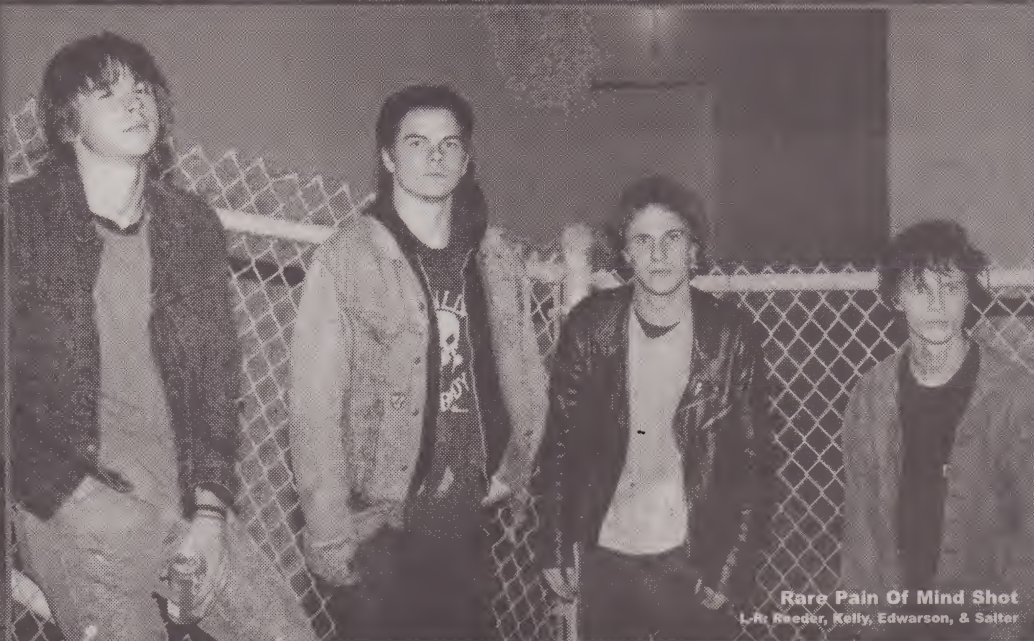
Over time, though, many fans grew dismayed as Neurosis compositions became slower and longer, with a few songs hitting the 13-minute mark. Black Flag had similar problems in 1984, when they released 'My War,' an album which begins fast, yet slows to a crawl as side two rolls around. Gregg Ginn and Co. had to endure fan complaints about sluggish tempos, and so did Neurosis upon releasing epic-length albums like 'Souls At Zero' (1992) and 'Enemy Of The Sun' (1993). In both band's cases, though, it's quite evident that 'slow was the way to go.'

In 1985, guitarist Scott Kelly and bassist Dave Edwardson were playing in a D.R.I.-styled group called Violent Coercion. With a flannel-wearing lead singer by the name of Jason Storey, the music was rough and aggressive. They'd perform at now-deceased Bay Area clubs like The Mabuhay Gardens, New Method Warehouse, and Club Foot. By December of that year, the band were playing ripper shows, but Kelly said that the group was breaking up; he and Dave were splitting off to form Neurosis.

The early days of the band were inauspicious. In 1986, the American Hardcore scene was caving in on itself. Tons of bands were in the grip of crossover. If they weren't going soft like 7 Seconds, they were resorting to poorly executed emulations of Metallica (see D.R.I.) Groups were climbing all over each other to get signed, while scene kingpins Dead Kennedys and Black Flag had broken up.

Amidst the decay, Neurosis got their start. For a year, they played shows as a three piece, with Kelly, Edwardson, and drummer Jason Roeder. In late 1986, Berkeley's Gilman Street Warehouse opened up. The band would perform here frequently. Founded by Maximumrockandroll Magazine as sort of a co-op, an initial \$2.00 got you a 'lifetime membership' into the club. (Actually, later on, you had to renew every two years!)

January 1987, Neurosis added



Rare Pain Of Mind Shot
L-R: Roeder, Kelly, Edwardson, & Salter



Neurosis Group Shot
1993, Enemy Of The Sun

Chad Salter on second guitar. This is the lineup that would go on to record the debut LP, 'Pain of Mind,' for the fledgling Alchemy Records. Jason Storey's cover illustration, a bleak portrait of grime, perfectly encapsulates the album's contents. Though the record sold well, Alchemy ended up imploding. Chad didn't stay in the band too long, and they recruited another guitarist named Pete for the Lookout! Records 'Aberration 7'.

March, 1989 saw the addition of Steve von Till on guitar and vocals. This is when the nucleus of the band truly locked in, and the combo was

on their way. 'The Word As Law' is the album that many punkers still cling to today. Eight songs with crisp and pure production. Dave Edwardson's bass comes alive on this one, drawing favorable comparisons to Iron Maiden's Steve Harris.

The first two albums have left such a long-term legacy, that it's almost impossible to go to a Neurosis show without excitable fans yelling out 'Pain of Mind!', or 'The Word As Law!' Band members, however, don't have the highest opinion of this material, with von Till going as far as to say the second album "straight up sucks."

By this time, Neurosis established their habit of consistently touring. For the most part, the early road trips were poorly funded adventures. They'd play parties, skateboard ramps, and if they were lucky, a club. With no money, they'd survive off of "baloney and water" for weeks. When the van broke down, they were screwed.

In April 1991, they took a major step forward in expanding their vision, adding Simon Mellroy on keyboards, as well as film projectionist Adam Kendall. Upon the keyboard's live debut, many punker-



Steve von Till
1995, Photo By J.H.

than-though Gilman denizens had a collective heart attack. Kelly states, "They could barely stand to look at it, you know..."

Dead Kennedys' mothership label Alternative Tentacles signed the band, and 1992's 'Souls At Zero' was released. This is where they began striving to be epic, and for the most part succeed. Sidestepping predictability, this one even utilizes violin and cello.

On the other hand, if you're looking for sludge and slime, one would be hard-pressed to find something as harrowing as 1993's 'Enemy Of The Sun.' In addition to some insanely heavy riffs, this album introduced the

standup drum kit pounding of Kelly and von Till. Joining Roeder on percussion, tribal thunder rains down to an extreme. Working with engineer Billy Anderson for the first time, Kelly asserts that "this was the first time we felt we recorded well." One glance at the charred vampire on the cover, and you pretty much know what you're going to get.

By late 1993, however, they were looking for a new keyboardist, while seeking a new projectionist as well. Visualist Kendall had departed, due to his dislike of touring. Band buddy Pete Inc. was given a shot to run the films and slides, and he took to it quickly.

For keyboards/samples, they turned to Noah Landis, who was originally the guitar/vocalist of East Bay punk legends Christ On Parade. In the 1980's, this band made some noise, releasing two albums and as many singles.

Landis' Neurosis debut was in March, 1994, at the Berkeley Square. Visibly agitated, he was nearly overwhelmed by the complex task at hand. With time,



though, he'd grow to be a master of the soundscape.

In the 80s, band members had no problem addressing the audience. ("This one's our ballad...") but by the 1990s, they'd grown mute. To some, this was refreshing, but others would be unnerved by their laconic approach. ("They didn't even say 'What's up!'")

Black Flag had their instrumental albums and jams, while Neurosis has the Tribes of Neurot. Same members, but the sonic eruptions are wildly unpredictable. It really is just pure noise. After Tribes of Neurot left the stage following a March, 1998 exhibition at San Francisco's Fillmore, a security guard wondered aloud, "Was that a set, or the Emergency Broadcast System?" These days, Tribes play more frequently than Neurosis, and this 'band' has released a string of compact discs and vinyl,

including the two-disc 'Adaptation And Survival.' The entire project is comprised solely of electronically manipulated insect sounds.

In April 1996, 'Through Silver In Blood' was released. The airtight production encases the listener in a world of cathartic urgency. The title itself was derived from Scott Kelly almost succumbing to a toxic dose of paint fumes while spraying the walls of his Oakland residence. Despite the dour circumstances, the album is a breakthrough for the band. A U.S. tour opening for Pantera gave them a taste of arenas, and each date was an opportunity to recruit new fans. However, they probably confused as many people as they entertained.

With the invitation to join the 1997 Ozzfest tour, Neurosis scaled another rung of the rock and roll ladder. The daytime side stage performances prevented projectionist Pete Inc. from

Return To Gilman
1997, Photo By Lawrence Arrowsmith



splashing light and films upon the band, but they got by on their powerful stage presence. 'Silver' continued to rack up sales, and the numbers outdistanced the four previous albums. Following Ozzfest, the band continued to tour, back in the familiar headlining spot. Santa Fe's Logical Nonsense was recruited to open, and the final show was held in September, at Berkeley's Gilman Street.

While loading in the tons of electrical gear they now employed, there were concerns that the tiny club wouldn't be able to handle the wattage. The show went off without a power failure, but a year and a half on the road was taking its toll. Kelly and von Till warmed up before going onstage. "I'm the opposite of loose," were Steve's last remarks before the weary guitarist got up there and battered the stand-up drum kit. The tribal session transformed

into 'The Web,' and concluded ninety minutes later with 'Through Silver In Blood.' The band only had to do five more weeks in Europe, then would return home.

Touring, they've witnessed some strange sights. Dave Edwardson elaborates: "One night, the show was just getting going. This guy got stabbed by some skinheads. While we're playing, he gets onstage and says to the audience, 'I just got stabbed, and those fuckers did it!' He pulls up his shirt, and there's blood everywhere. The whole crowd turns and chases after the skinheads, emptying the place out. We go, 'Guess the show's over.' The next year, we played the same place. There's something in the paper that says 'Neurosis is back, and skinheads better beware. Remember what happened last time. So, it's kind of tense, but the show goes off without a hitch. We go out-



Scott Kelly
1995, Photo By Steve Edwards

side after and load the equipment, and somebody had slashed all the tires on our truck..."

In the last part of 1997, the band came home and were finally able to decompress. On tour, night after night, the energy the band emanated was inhuman. How they managed to give so much over such a long period of time is astounding. Thankfully, the demands upon the group were given a rest, and it became time for the batteries to recharge. Neurosis wouldn't perform onstage again for over a year.

In early 1998, the band set up shop in Oakland's Soundwave Studios. The ample rehearsal space could barely contain the gear utilized by the band. It was in this room that the next LP would be brought to life. Subscribing to the Black Flag work ethic, new songs were harvested over eight hour sessions, six days a week. Riff segments were taped to the walls, describing such pieces as 'The Shining' and 'New Psych Glory.'

In October 1998, a message flashed on the Relapse Records website. It stated that the band was recording the

new album in Chicago, with none other than Steve Albini. With a sonically jagged album like Nirvana's 'In Utero' credited to Albini, there was no need to worry that he would tamper with the Oakland sound.

Recording at half-speed on a two-inch 24-track reel, the forthcoming Neurosis epic was guaranteed to have a sludgy sound. Throughout October, 140 minutes of music was recorded, more than enough material to assemble an exceptional album. Post production was completed in San Francisco, and many hours were spent bringing the record to life. By mid-November, 'Times of Grace' was ready to be unleashed. Still, it wouldn't see the light of day for six more months.

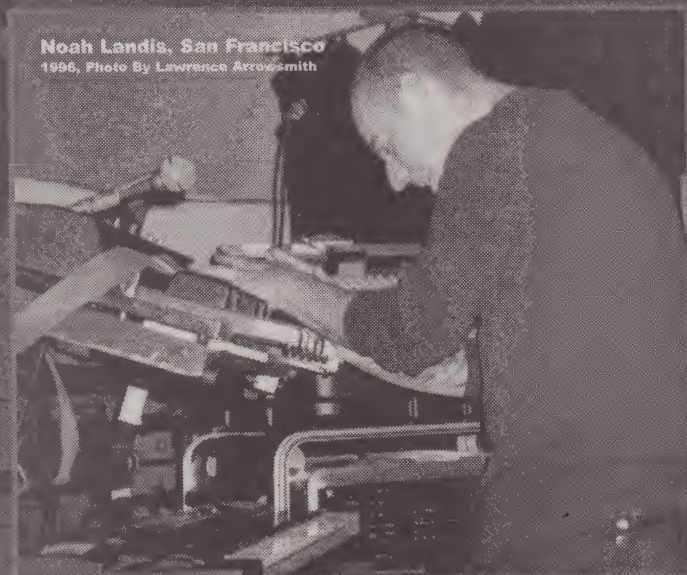
While rumors and mystery surrounded the band, an auspicious announcement appeared in a S.F. newspaper. The ominous sickle signaled that Neurosis would return to the live stage on December 12th, 1998. The ad also stated that only new material would be performed. On this evening, the band unveiled the songs that would comprise the

Steve von Till Solo

Photo By J.H.



**Noah Landis, San Francisco
1996, Photo By Lawrence Arrowsmith**



new album, as well as the 'Sovereign' E.P.

As the album was being readied for a May release, Tribes of Neurot busied themselves recording a companion disc to the upcoming Neurosis release. The unique experience of this approach was to create something that could be played simultaneously with 'Times of Grace,' with both albums being the exact same length.

In the Spring, promotional copies of the new album began leaking out. The cover artwork is from a wood-carving of a fire breathing Fenris Wolf. The music itself runs the gamut. The disc is book ended with orchestral pieces, beginning and closing with symphonic excellence. However, on track two, Scott Kelly

sets the riff in motion, and the heaviness of 'The Doorway' unleashes the fury that is threaded throughout the album. Although band members claimed on this record that they were capturing the light, this one is heavier than ever!

On Tuesday, May 4th, the new one hit the record stores. Fortunately, for vinyl junkies, 'Times of Grace' was released as a deluxe gatefold double LP. A couple of months later, 'Grace,' the CD-only Tribes of Neurot companion disc became available. Whoever couldn't get two disc players was left out in the cold, but for those who did, it's a tripped-out listening experience. The two sides of the band had finally convened, and what you get is a bizarre sonic textur-

al exploration.

To promote the album, Neurosis went back out on the road. Even though the live performances were perhaps their greatest accomplishments, weariness began to tear at the band. There were wives and children left at home, as the group seemed to constantly be on tour. As each member grew into their 30's, being with their families began to become much more important. The itinerary was going to consume them for the next couple of years, and nerves started to fray. A European tour in Autumn was successful, and the band returned home to perform with Voivod. On December 12th, 1999, the Oakland crew gave an incredible performance at San Francisco's Great American

Music Hall. Following the show, they shut it down, refusing to go back out on the road. Neurosis came home and stayed.

Laying low on the live scene, the only concerts in 2000 were three shows in Japan, and one in San Francisco. They honored the obligation to travel overseas, and the April performances pleased the Far East fans thirsting for some Oakland metal. The band brought their road crew along, yet longtime stalwart Pete The Roadie was amazed by the efficiency of the Japanese stagehands. 'After the shows, we'd start breaking stuff down, but the equipment started disappearing all around me. The Japanese had it all loaded into the truck in no time!'

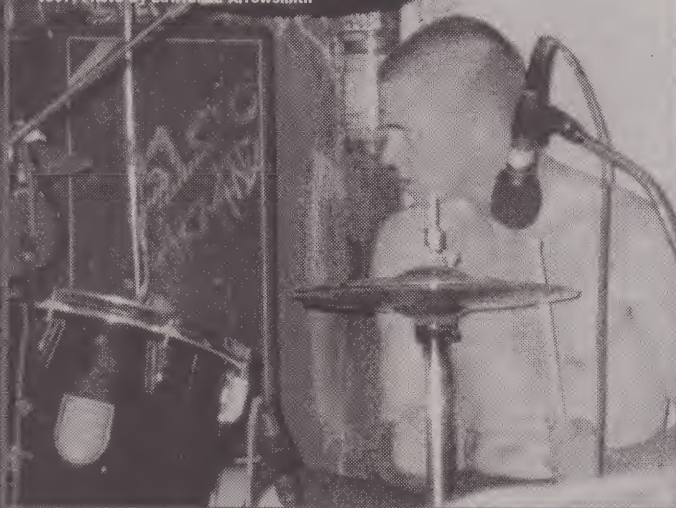
Dave Edwardson
1995, Photo By J.H.



Steve von Till, Cyclone Warehouse, San Francisco
1996, Photo By Lawrence Arrowsmith



Jason Roeder, Gilman Street
1997, Photo By Lawrence Arrowsmith



December, 2000, they once again made the trek to Chicago. Being true practitioners of comprehensive pre-production, 'A Sun That Never Sets' was recorded and mixed in nine days. Amber Asylum's Kris Force was brought in to lend her unique violin stylings. She has appeared on several Neurosis recordings. What's that like?

"Sometimes I'm prepared. You know, they'll give me a tape or a cd. For A Sun That Never Sets, I played viola and acoustic violin, and I only did electric on one song. I went through someone's amp. That was revealing as well, because that was one take. Steve Albini was like, "Wow!" He'd never heard anyone play like that. But the

acoustic stuff was kind of laborious. Albini has a really great live room, and really amazing microphones. Some of Times of Grace was recorded in San Francisco, and Steve came out to mix it."

Force has also performed live numerous times with the group, taking the stage a few songs into the set. "It's really male, really a guy thing," she states. What goes through her mind while sharing the stage with such intense individuals? "I hope his sweat doesn't splash me!"

With now-permanent family lives and a firm reluctance to tour, Neurosis staged two of their own four-night 'Beyond The Pale' festivals in San Francisco, (2001/2002.) The shows seemed to go well

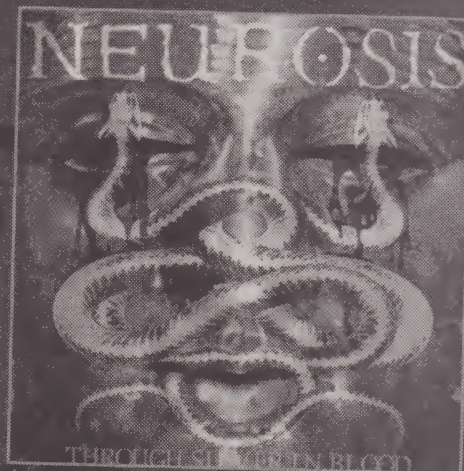
enough, drawing people from literally all over the world. Don't expect another one any time soon, though.

"I don't know, the first year was so perfect, it was like magic. The second one, some of the bands got to be demanding. It was a pain in the ass. If we have another one, it'll probably be in Belgium or something. Save up for a plane ticket..."

No longer a touring entity, band members occupy their time with various musical pursuits. Dave Edwardson hooked up with East Bay punkers The Enemies, playing bass on a couple of

records and going on tour.

Scott Kelly's first solo record, 'Spirit Bound Flesh,' (2001,) is a sparse acoustic outing. Rather than repeat the process, he enlisted Neurosis keyboardist/sample man Noah Landis and a couple of other





Neurosis Onstage, Corona, CA
1995, Photo By Steve Edwards

Scott Kelly Unsettled
1996, Photo By J.H.



Dave Edwardson
1995, Photo By Lawrence Arrowsmith

guys to form Blood And Time. This being more of a band-type situation, the result is the full-bodied 'At The Foot of The Garden,' released in February of this year. Kelly does away with his trademark scream, getting down to some singing. With the

album's first line being 'I've been looking through some photographs/all my wishes won't bring you back,' this is a musically rich experience.

Steve von Till performs and records under his own name, often-times utilizing the guitar services of

The Enablers' Joe Goldring. Joe's six string texturing can be heard on von Till's second album, 'If I Should Fall To The Field' (2002.) Steve has commenced recording his next one, working in San Francisco with engineer Desmond Shea.

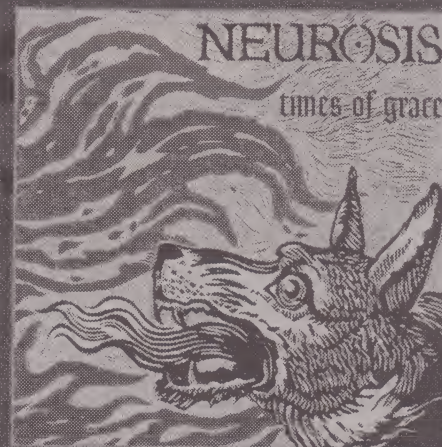
The San Jose-based von Till also runs the band's Neurot Recordings with his wife, Kristin. A lot of work goes into running the day to day operations. In addition to band member side projects, they've issued diverse offerings such as Tarantula Hawk, Grails, KK Null, House of Low Culture, and Oxbow. There's also a Neurosis 'Official Bootleg' series, where choice sets are mixed down from the multi-tracks, giving high quality sounds for low cost.

If that's not enough to keep von Till busy, he also happens to be an elementary schoolteacher by day. A schoolteacher? You bet! "I've had to

report

myself for swearing twice."

"This kid in class had his sweatshirt on backwards, with the hood covering his face. I said, 'Hey, will you take the sweatshirt off?'" Nothing. 'Please take off the sweatshirt.' Nothing. 'Hey, will you take the fucking sweatshirt off? I went to the office right then to report myself. The last thing you need is some kid going home, telling their parents. 'Guess what the teacher said today!'" R



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WALLS OF JERICO



PHOTO: JOHN MCKAIG

By Stefani Ricci

When people think of hardcore music certain legendary bands come to mind; Black Flag, Minor Threat, even newer bands like Sick of It All, and Hatebreed, the list could go on and on. These were bands that not only set standards for a genre waiting to be defined, but bands that delivered a dose of inspiration and innovation that revolutionized an underground movement waiting to be recognized, waiting to be heard. In a genre dominated by elitist ego, treading in a scene where most women seem to be on the sidelines rather than commanding the crowd, Candice Kucsulian from Detroit's Walls of Jericho is redefining the standards for women in hardcore music. Only to solidify the fact that girls too, have the guts, gusto and blood curdling scream to engulf a room and captivate a crowd. With her presence outweighing her size, Kucsulian has been in the hardcore scene for over a decade. Thriving on passion and desire, commanding the mic was just the next natural step for this hardcore vet. After a two-year hiatus and a couple of drummers later, Walls of Jericho have reemerged from the depths of silence with its strongest line-up to date, proving, patience is a virtue. The bands savvy mix of metal, hardcore, and thrash explode into a venomous hybrid few bands can compete with. With their newest release, "All Hail The Dead" being embraced with open arms not only by the metalcore masses, but critics abound, I was able to catch up with Kucsulian to find out how it feels to return to the road and be back in the "hardcore" swing of things.

Starting the band in 1998 in Detroit, what was the hardcore/metalcore scene like, where there any women trying to make a stance, and when

you started with Walls, were there any preconceived notions?

In actual hardcore itself, not metal, there were no girls. They

were more in punk and indie rock. Since hardcore was still so underground they hadn't mixed the two. People totally didn't think that a woman could do it. When I would

get up on stage people would think, "Oh what's she gonna do," then I'd prove them wrong. It's cool, you just gotta set the standard.

With metalcore really exploding, a lot of opportunities are being presented for bands on labels like Trustkill to play second stage at festivals like Ozzfest. What do you attribute to the rise of popularity for metalcore, how do you feel about more doors like that being opened, and do you feel it's about time?

I definitely think it's about time. I think it's amazing for all the bands that have been struggling for such a long time to be able to make a living at this. It enables them to do this for a living and do it well, to be able to play music and pay their rent. Hardcore is a message and it's amazing that more and more kids are coming out to the shows.

Do you feel "underground music" today is more about fashion quo's and facades than actual playing ability and passion? How do you see the scene? Do you feel it's more about designer looks and \$80 dollar haircuts? Is it different from city to city?

I would say that it's 50/50 right now, it's definitely different from city to city.

Do you find in smaller cities that the scenes are more passionate and into the music, or is it kind of the opposite compared to a bigger cities since they've been around it for so long?

The bigger cities definitely know what it's about, though the smaller scenes tend to be more united, it actually just depends on where you go. The Worcester, Massachusetts scene is huge, it's just amazing. Everyone there is so great, they're always into the



PHOTO: STEPHANIE MITCHELL



PHOTO: STEPHANIE MITCHELL



PHOTO: STEPHANIE MITCHELL

music, they're always going off. The politics aren't there, which in hardcore, that bullshit shouldn't be there. You should want to hear the music and go crazy, not hear who did what to who.

What do you think is drawing more women into the scene?

Actually, I don't really know, and I don't really care. Whether it's MTV drawing them, their boyfriends, or the fact that they just want to go, whatever it is, as long as they stick around, that's cool for me. I'm not here to judge anybody for why they're here or anything; to me way too many people do that.

As long as you're here, great, have a good time.

With the first record, "Bound Feed The Gagged", people seemed really impressed right off the bat, giving the band almost an immediate cult following. With such a positive response, what was the cause of disbanding in 2001?

We actually did break up. There were a couple of things going on at the time. We had the option of pursuing this full time so we all had to think about. At the time our drummer had decided that he wanted to go to school, so he moved to Seattle. That meant that we couldn't

tour full time. After that, we tried out like 6 or 7 different drummers but no one fit. We didn't want to sacrifice one thing for another. It was all or nothing. We didn't want to have someone and not get along with them, or get along with someone and they just couldn't keep up. We then contacted Alexi (current drummer) while he was still in Catharsis, but he was living in Germany at the time so he couldn't commit. So at that time we had to call it quits, we had no other options.

How did you guys entice him (Alexi) to come over here?

About a year later he moved back to the States and contacted us, it

pretty much went from there.

So how was the recording process for you guys on this record, do you find it difficult to be in the studio?

We actually started writing the record last April and recorded it this past September. We wrote it in less than five months.

Really?

Yeah, we busted our ass writing that record. We practiced every day, we wanted to make sure that we didn't have any empty space, and with that little amount of time to record, that can happen pretty easily.

This record seems incredibly intense from every angle, kind of portraying this grueling, pissed off passion about dealing with life and emotional tragedy. Do you find it easier to write and be creative when turmoil and chaos surround your life? Where do you seek inspiration?

Actually for four months while we were recording that record, I couldn't write a single fucking song. I tried, I sat there and nothing was coming out of me. The whole time I was thinking, "what's wrong?" Still at that point in time though I was still going through a lot of shit, I wasn't quite out of it yet, so that was definitely kind of tough. Writing about it really didn't help, but whatever, fuck em'. (laughs) Really when things are going my way I just don't know

what to do, I don't really have any creative inspiration. I didn't want to write a real positive record, granted, it's more positive since it's about self help and shit, but at the same time I can't write happy go lucky lyrics. I wanted a real straight forward CD, this is what I think, and this is how I feel, so people would get the point no matter what.

I know you said earlier that you guys didn't want to put any filler on this record, that every song was of equal intensity. Is there one song on this record that you feel really symbolizes what this record is about?

I think "A Little Piece of Me," and "All Hail The Dead," I really love those songs. On "A Little Piece Of Me," we all really feel the lyrics. To me, it's got really good fast parts, like danceable old school fast stuff, with just really amazing breakdowns.

You've said that you put everything on the line for this record, what did you really mean by that?

What I meant by that was that I really put myself out there.

Just being totally vulnerable?

Yeah I wasn't going to hold back, but vulnerable in a strong way. Sometimes you don't want to say certain things because everyone is always afraid that they'll offend somebody. I just got so tired of feeling like that, this is me ya know, and if you don't fucking like me I don't fucking care. Life goes on, get the hell out of my face, I don't care. If you like our band great, if you don't like our band sweet, you'll stand in the back. I just don't have time for the politics in hardcore. Hardcore is there for a reason, it's there for fun, it's there for a release, and there's no release in shit talking. I'm just here to have a good time, to get my message out and have people be a part of it.

This is a band that lives on the road, it's how you've come to where you're at now. How has the response been to the new material, are you getting back everything you put into the



PHOTO: STEPHANIE MITCHELL

making of this record?

The response to the record has been very well. We've been out on the road for about a month now, we're pretty much just trying to do as much as we possibly can do.

What are the bands immediate plans, and what are your plans after you finish up this little tour with Bury Your Dead, and 36 Crazy Fists?

After we play Metal Fest next week, we're home for three days,

then it's off to the U.K. for two weeks with My Ruin. After that, we come home for two weeks and then it's back to Europe, though at that point we'll be playing all the fests and stuff.

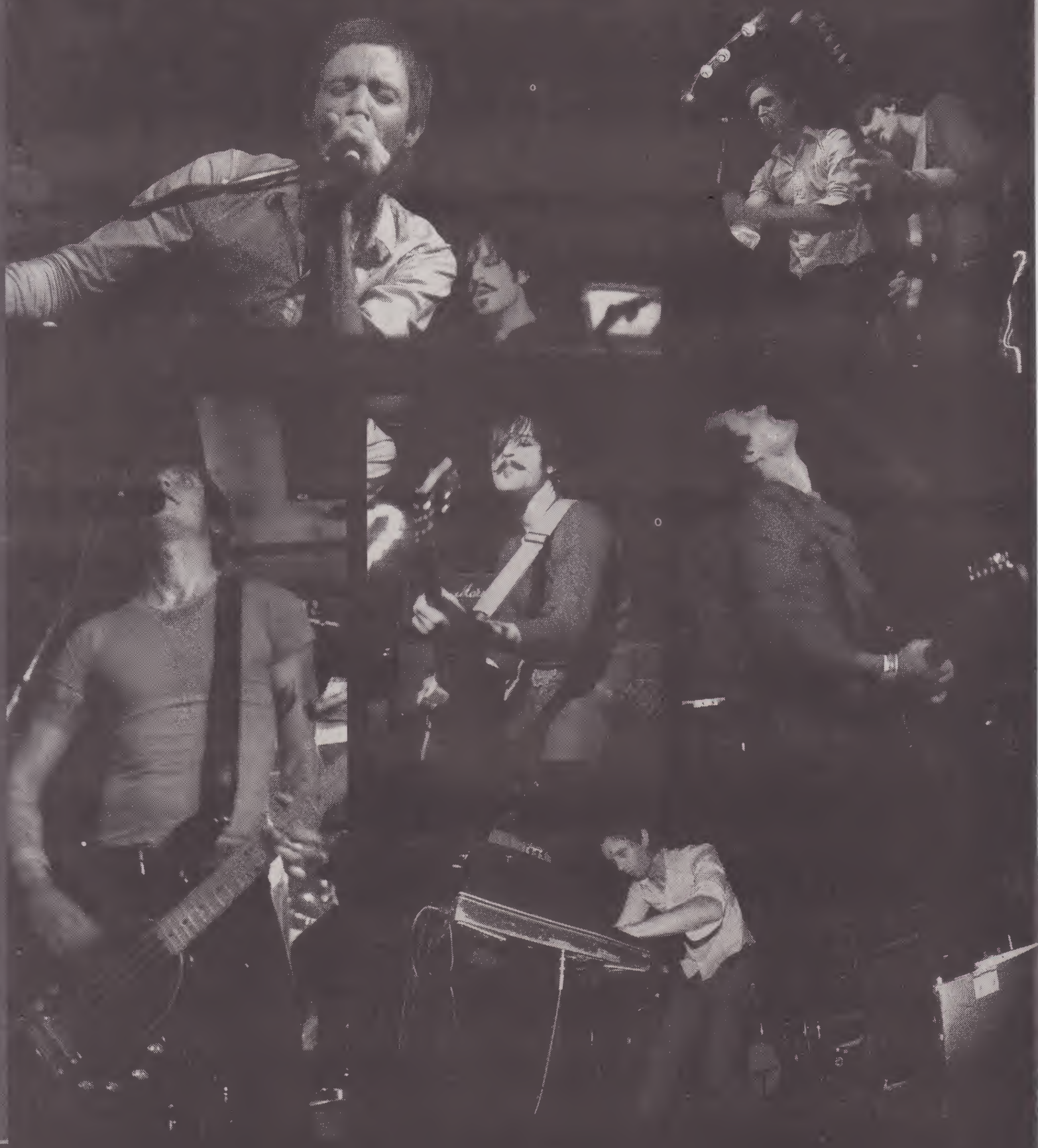
Will you be playing Hellfest?
Yes, definitely.

Cool. Alright do you have any final words?

Uuuuh, nope. (Laughs) Mosh or die. ☛

evening

LIVE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE HILL, SAN FRANCISCO / PHOTOS BY JOHN JOH



KILOWATTHOURS & THE RUM DIARY

Truly an east meets west in the world of indie rock. Kilowatthours hail from Brooklyn and The Rum Diary hail from Cotati, a small town just north of San Francisco. Both bands have developed signature sounds that emphasize melody, layering, soft vocals, and variance in styles between each song. They met in true indie rock fashion. Kilowatthours were touring the west coast and having trouble trying to secure a show in the bay area. The Rum Diary, who was already fans of the east coast act, heard the distress calls and extended an invitation to the Kilowatthours to join them on a bill they were headlining at an old dirty Oakland warehouse. After the show it was clear that a split release would be in the near future. Less than six months later each band recorded four new songs and collaborated on one. Prior to this release both bands have captured the imagination of college radio, press, and other musicians with their independent albums. This release show-cases two up and coming hard working bands poised for national success. A must have for fans of: **Three Mile Pilot, Sonic Youth, Dianogah, Pinback, & My Bloody Valentine.**

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THEE WHISKEY REBEL

SEPTEMBER ENTRY:

**"FOR THE LAST TIME BEFORE
NOVEMBER: SHOVE YOUR ELECTION
RHETORIC!"**

I've had such a fucking stomach churning overdose full of this goddamn election year. I'm not a democrat or republican. I don't like Bush or Kerry very much. My idea of the sort of President we need surpasses anything the entrenched parties have to offer. To me all the wrangling and partisan political rhetoric I read in publications (including this one) is about as intellectually significant as a debate between fans of rival NFL teams.

BOTH candidates have more in common than a whopping majority of folks who chant slogans and parrot partisan allegations will ever realize. BOTH are filthy rich and will live quite well in their own circles regardless who wins. It's a battle of millionaires...JUST like in the NFL or NBA. I have plenty of problems in my life...and I have since I became an adult and had to begin fending for myself. Politics is goddamned low on my list of priorities.

A lot of you are very concerned about specific pet issues. Well, as I've stated before in these pages...SO DO I. My issue is PERSONAL HEDONISTIC PLEASURE. Forgive me if I don't appear to support your "CAUSE". Where were you all those frigging years I had to deal with bosses...fuckface co-workers...or worse yet Monday morning job interviews in the interest of simply carving out a way to continue living at lower middle class level?? I've hated 98% of people since I was a kid on the playground. They all expected me to get off on their stupid games and horse shit and TV shows that bore the fuck out of me. I had to learn to avoid coming off as intelligent for fear of attracting the wrath of the mass of morons who couldn't wait to grow up to be just like their rubber stamped, brain-dead parents with their houses filled with overpriced conformist department store furniture and religious symbols representing faiths they had troubles being faithful to.

In the workplace for so many damned years I had to pretend to NOT be the fucking creative, intelligent free thinker that I am. Co-workers almost always resented it. The few exceptions were people I embraced with respect regardless of their age, sex, race, background, religious hang-ups, etc. ALL I ever wanted from the dumb ass tribe of humanoids I was born into by accident was room to be myself and not have to conform to popular ways NOT to have to pretend to be into the normal religious nonsense NOT to have to pretend to be concerned about their lives or their social and political causes.

I've sure as hell never expected my fellow human beings to want to suddenly institute a political system based on intelligence rather than stale arguments about morals and ideals. I don't expect my fellow Americans to suddenly want to revamp all the moronic, antiquated, fuddy-duddy fucking blue laws and morally legislated rules that target hedonists like myself. I don't expect the liquor taxes to be rolled back to benefit me. I don't expect people I smoked pot with in high school to develop the balls necessary to do away with silly anti marijuana laws now that they're middle aged.

Of course I know that my suggestion of a one time BIBLE TAX will never even be discussed except among the sort of alcoholics

and satanists I hang out with.

"People" have disappointed me for my entire life. I've learned to survive living amongst a species of boobs by lowering my expectations and learning to hide my true feelings at institutes of conformist learning, job sites, in malls, restaurants and bars and while utilizing forms of public transportation.

I just don't magically expect everybody to want to do things my way; why should all of you with viewpoints that are unpopular expect to have the members of the species who disagree with you surrender to your idealistic whims???

HHHHMMMM???

To the readers who have read me express these feelings before who actually "understand"...I'm SORRY to repeat myself. In a few weeks it'll all be over...just in time for the same old political salts who rile me up every election year to turn their attention to the OTHER favorite source of nonstop all American bickering...the NFL!!

Oh yeah. All you people who emailed me 4 years ago bitching at me claiming I have no right to complain if I don't vote...you'll be "happy" (Hah!!) to know I registered Libertarian. I'll throw my lot in with them since they appear to be a party that seems willing to at least offer up some intelligent arguments that at least acknowledge a wide variety of individual opinions. Furthermore, if former Governor Jesse Ventura makes a run in 2008 I'll bust my ass doing shit work for his campaign. I hereby officially suggest that if your conscience tells you to vote for the Green party candidate or the late Pat Paulson or Lyndon fucking LaRouche or the toe sucking candidate that you do so. We need MORE parties to choose from...that's for goddamned sure. So there.

On to something REALLY important.

I read a while back that Chubby Checker demonstrated outside of a rock and roll hall of fame function. He told the press that he doesn't give a damn about being a member of the hall...but that he's pissed because his work doesn't receive proper recognition.

FINALLY a protest I can identify with. Chubby's music is indeed head and shoulders above that of many inductees. I think the rock and roll hall of fame is a fucking JOKE. It's sick how many true pioneers of rock and roll aren't recognized at all. Even the great Gene Vincent was only begrudgingly inducted several years along...into a holy roster of rockers that includes icons like Billy Joel, Simon and Garfunkel and Bonnie Raitt.

Chubby Checker didn't actually write "the twist"...Hank Ballard did. Chubby's version became a humongous hit that launched an incredibly huge fad. Twist dance clubs opened everywhere. It was a simple dance that anybody could do...danced to an energetic beat. It was REAL rock and roll at least...unlike the music of Hall of famers Jimmy Reed (a blues guy) Pete Seeger (a folkie..no rock and roll in his style AT ALL) James Taylor and even the Staples Singers?!?!?!...a soul act that once recorded a duet with George Jones I enjoy...but never came within a mile of playing rock and roll.

Somebody at the cliquish hall of fame obviously has it in for Chubby...he hasn't been inducted...but Hank Ballard HAS BEEN...even though Hank's high water mark song "finger poppin' time" hit maybe number 20 on the charts...whereas Chubby sold something like 250 million records (I checked...he DID). For that matter, Dick Clark who became famous hosting a dance show "American bandstand" that developed an audience nationwide thanks to the mass popularity of Chubby's music has ALSO been inducted. The chubster didn't have just one hit...he followed up "the twist" with a raft of followups (like "let's twist again") and songs related to other

THEE WHISKEY REBEL

dances such as "Pony Time" the incredibly cool FUZZ guitar laden number "THE FLY" and Chubby's other mega-hit that shook American culture to it's foundation the "LIMBO ROCK."

Whereas a lot of dance music is too wimpy or non-rocking to appeal to me, Chubby's music ROCKED in comparison. I have a LIVE album of his released on Cameo Parkway label 40 years ago that stands alongside James Brown's infamous live work of the day.

I've played it several times per year for the last 20 years or so. I love to play it for people who under estimate Checker's rocking abilities. I first became a complete and total Chubby Checker mark when I purchased a shopping cart loaded with 7" vinyl 60's records for \$7.00 at a thrift store in Vancouver Washington in 1980. There were many, many great Chubby disc's in that batch. I soon sought out his albums...and I even erected a shrine of sorts to him on a wall that maybe 2 or 3 long time friends can remember in our old home on North Portland Blvd. in Portland. The album covers hanging on the wall were destroyed by a house fire...and I haven't gotten around to building another one...although I've long since replaced the vinyl of course.

Rock and roll needed Chubby when he came along to inject life into a music taken over by grinning lily-white pretty boys like Frankie Avalon and Fabian whose music was AWFUL and had no discernible beat whatsoever. Rock and Roll NEEDS Chubby and other REAL rockers once again. Oldies radio has been destroyed and rendered unlistenable by stations in that format simply beating to death non-rocking lightweight Mo-town music. Since the late 60's "rock and roll" has become the unfortunate genre name standing for horrible hippie pop garbage warbled out by hall of famers such as (believe it or not) James Taylor, Crosby Stills & Nash and the red hot, supreme rocking potentates of popular culture known as the "Young Rascals." As far as I'm concerned, the snotty hall of shame in Cleveland needs to induct the following "reject" artists (simply to name a few...I apologize for other's I'm too forgetful to list here) to establish credibility before I EVER agree to set foot in that dump: Chubby Checker, Esqurita, the Johnny Burnette rock and roll trio, Big Jay McNeely, Joe Houston, Hardrock Gunter, the Treniers, Wynonie Harris, Sonny Burgess, Billy Lee Riley, the Sonics, the Wailers, Link Wray, Roky Erickson, the Standells, Sam the Sham and the Pharaoh's, the MC5, the Seeds, Gary Glitter, Slade, Black Sabbath the New York Dolls, the Stooges and eventually more recent acts such as the Sex Pistols and the Cramps.

HHHmmm. Check out that list a second time; I'd be more than happy to take their collective recordings to a desert Island and leave the official "hall of (!?) fame" pile behind for a bonfire. Wouldn't it be great if there was a radio station in YOUR town that played music by those folks??? HHMMM?? Yeah, yeah...there are "inducted" members who deserve the recognition...but let's face it.

The problem with the Rock and roll hall of fame is that the artists in too many cases don't ROCK...they "Pop" in a politically correct and "diverse" fashion that is meant to mean something to mainstream "adult" Americans who are total SQUARES...and who listen to Yanni and secretary soft rock these days. Those people outnumber those of us who love REAL ROCK AND ROLL...so naturally the hall of fame clique will continue to pander to them by inducting primarily light weight pop acts. You can damn well expect to see Hottie and the Blowfish, Paula Abdul, Toto and Deborah Gibson inducted LONG before room will ever be made for rocker's who might offend someone or seem "too loud" such as biker rock instrumental King Davie Allen, Ronnie Self, the Sparkletones, Black Oak Arkansas, Wanda Jackson, the Sweet, Jayne County, Black Flag, the Dead Kennedy's and Motorhead.

I salute Chubby's noble protest. His cause is on a personal basis to me more worthy than 99% of the last "causes" I've seen people marching in the street over. REAL ROCK AND ROLL is more important to me than whether a species of owl is wiped out...or whether some frigging jackass terrorist suspect is being fed and pampered properly in his prison cell. It's wonderful for people to want to "save the world"...well, how about IMPROVING the cultural quality of life in our part of the world just a bit by recognizing Chubby Checker's FUN rock and roll musical legacy over that of saps like this years new inductee...Jackson Brown??

RIGHT ON CHUBBY!!! I hear ya'!!!! I'm even ready to fight in the streets for your music if necessary if it'd mean the UN-induction and immediate outlawing of the hippie bands and their fans who've been pissing me off for 35 years.

Thee Whiskey Rebel P.O.Box 1781 San Marcos, Tx. 78666

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OCTOBER ENTRY: I DON'T BRAKE FOR BOSSES

I am IRKED once again. Of course, there's nothing new about that. Seems like I'm always irked about something unless I'm into my 10th or 15th or maybe 20th goddamned beer. What am I irked about this time?? Well, it's "labor day" as I sit here writing this ...and I'm peeved, disgusted and ready to rant thanks to yet another new, insulting and worthless trend in radio programming. At least a couple local music stations are trying to boost their ratings by playing tunes purporting to honor "working people". When the DJ's explain this, they claim to be paying respect to workers. As a man who worked for a quarter century at horrid, insulting jobs presided over by jackass bosses and surrounded by coworkers who usually wound up hating me for merely being M.Ed. say HOGWASH!! You are NOT "paying tribute" to workers by troweling out every stupid fucking song that seems to bear some sort of vague reference to the concept of employment. Let's check out some examples of what I heard them play to salute workers on a classic rock station.

"Working for the weekend" by Loverboy, "working for a living" by Huey Lewis and the news, that overplayed Dire Straights new wave number about moving appliances around (I don't CARE if I don't know the title) "dream on" by Aerosmith (??? huhhh?? what's that got to do with "working") and of course "born in the U.S.A." by Bruce Springstink.

The obvious problem I have from the get-go with all of those songs is the fact that they're all recorded by pampered millionaires. Yep, spoiled rotten musicians who drive fancy sports cars, sleep in expensive hotel rooms and have their pick of groupies to service their rock cock's. We're supposed to assume that frigging rock stars understand the mundane hell that is the American workplace?? HAH!!

Yes...I believe that bluesmen like Muddy Water's who spent thousands of hours picking cotton before achieving fame understood what it's all about. Yes I believe that Johnny Cash and Carl Perkins (who also grew up picking cotton) and Loretta Lynn understood what it was like to work 12-14 back breaking hours per day. BUT!!

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I'll goddamned bet you Randy Bachman and C.F. Turner haven't taken "care of business" in a workplace in at least 30 years or so. And the very idea of Eric Clapton....a mollycoddled rock icon since the mid 60's....singing the "blues" about any facet of life seems preposterous.

So why in the hell do the masses suck up this sort of bullshit??

For the same reasons ALL OF YOU with few exceptions have BEEN CONDITIONED to suck up to the moon-June-spoon "wisdom" of the tripe gushing out of your stereo, television or radio speakers.

For that matter...to be perfectly honest I was no damned different when I was young and impressionable. Well...now I'm OLD and WISE...and I KNOW DAMNED WELL that even the smartest people from bands I've met over the last quarter century are full of shit some of the time and often write about subjects they know little about...even though their "fans" aren't able to differentiate when they're speaking from their gut or just blabbering buzz words out that sound cool.

Anyway, when I hear the conventional accepted "work oriented" songs on the radio I am disgusted with few exceptions. "Take this job and shove it" is one of the jewels...it's probably the best work song you're likely to hear on contemporary radio. It was written by the great David Allan Coe and given to his pal Johnny Paycheck to record and eventually covered by even the Dead Kennedy's and of course more recently mutilated by a rapper. "Workingman's blues" by Merle Haggard is a great song...so are "sixteen tons" (written by Merle Travis...one of the finest guitar geniuses you've likely never heard of) which is an old 50's chestnut but still heard on oldies and tradition country radio stations. Goddamnit...just ONCE I'd like to hear the fantastic El Vez cover of "takin' care of business" on a mainstream radio station...but of course that would never happen; the songs are all selected by frigging computers and force-fed to stations.

Which means...year after year...labor day tribute after labor day tribute...we are serenaded on powerful retro-FM stations from sea to shining sea by FRAUDS like Bruce Springstink.

What the FUCK does ol' Bruce know about working?? The guys been a musician most of his life...and he's a millionaire many, many times over. Somewhere along the line though the "Rolling Stone generation" journalists selected him as some sort of representative of what down to earth blue collar people are supposed to be like. They've repeated the line of bull so many times and published so many photos of him wearing frayed blue jeans (originally belonging to one of his gardeners perhaps?) that it's considered THEE TRUTH right here and now in 2004. Remember...the gospel according to Rolling Stone is NOT to be questioned. Of course Bruce did a fine job on his end by summoning up John Steinbeck's "Tom Joad" (from the depression era novel the "grapes of wrath") in his songs and waving the flag often.

Nowadays Bruce is sort of a symbolic icon...as convincing as Santa Claus for millions of REAL working folk who should know better. What does Bruce know about the mind-raping cycle of pointless job interviews millions of us have to go through week after week...month after month...trying to find a wagon to hitch our yoke to??? Has Bruce ever walked smiling up to a new boss on his first payday to collect his first check...and experienced watching the asshole shrug his shoulders and pretend not to know him...to actually order him off his property??? Has Bruce ever been lectured for using a couple sheets of computer printer paper too many??? (I did. The same boss also monitored carefully the gradual sharpening of each pencil used by each worker). Has Bruce

ever suffered for years working at the same hellhole as the hated office agnostic or weirdo???? Has Bruce ever come home frustrated from a grueling, inhuman job and taken his frustrations out on his long suffering Wife and kids??

Lastly...whenever he DID work back in his childhood...did he wear flannel shirts and those trademark torn and tattered Levi's to work??

I've worked at a lot of places that would send you home if you showed up looking like that. I've worked plenty of places where you were expected to wear slacks and uncomfortable ties...the sort of places that didn't tolerate rock star mud-flap hairdo's...offices where you're scrutinized so closely you'd be "counseled" about facial hair or making comments about being into extreme rock and roll AT ALL.

Some of you may have read about my rise and fall in the working world "JOBJUMPER" (plug plug). It's sure as hell a great book....even if I do say so myself. When I wrote it I sort of wondered if anybody else was actually interested in reading THE TRUTH about the jobs I had which ranged from minimum wage retail jobs to lower management. I sold toilets (successfully)....and encyclopedias door to door...toiled in a few warehouses and was a temp for a few years to name just a few jobs of many. It turned out that there are several great books written by REAL workers.

"Rivethhead" by former Michigan auto worker Ben Hamper is certainly a goddamned classic. His "career" came very, very close to killing him. After reading his book in one sitting I felt like I HAD to get in touch with him. I sent him one of my books and a letter of praise. It turned out he had played my band on a radio show back in 1982...DAMN it's a small world. I found a copy of "a working stiff's manifesto" by Iain Levison not long after reading Rivethhead. It turned out to be another beautiful book by another man who fucking UNDERSTOOD. Levison describes a group job interview by a company targeting desperate English majors he attended that closely resembled my initial encyclopedia sales brainwash induction. Levison wound up with a couple jobs worse than any I've ever held...one being a gig where he wound up buried up to his neck in flapping fish all day long!! DAMN!!! Makes burger flipping or convenience store jobs seem pretty soft in comparison...eh?? I was lucky enough to track Iain down too. He's a great guy and a great writer...SURE AS HELL a man who's been down in the trenches at some HORRID nightmare jobs. After reading books like Hamper's and Levison's I'm afraid I'm not going to be impressed by either classic rock "work rock" ditties by crooners like Huey Lewis or bonehead 3 chord punk rock "fuck the boss" anthems written by spoiled middle class youths either for that matter.

I recently watched the film "Office Space". I expected to really enjoy it since I really enjoy Mike Judge's view of America. Beavis and Butthead can either be analyzed to death seriously...or simply and brainlessly enjoyed like a goopy plate of convenience store nachos. It's as accurate an artistic depiction of REAL people in 90's America as you're likely to find on television.

As a fairly new Texan I can guarandamntee you that his "King of the Hill" is a surprisingly accurate take on REAL Texan's...I've even heard all the goofy accents of his characters waiting in line at the grocery store. Anyway, Mike Judge is brilliant...but I thought "Office space" was a bit disappointing at times. The main character works in a pretty nice cubicle that afforded him a lot of privacy; the cubicles I spent the last few years of my office years working in were cut off at shoulder height and lined up like Kindergarten desks directly in front of the bosses glass walled office. You couldn't fart, sneeze or talk on the phone without the whole office knowing what

COLUMNS

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orifice you were using at all times. So I'm supposed to feel sorry for his main character??? Also, the guy was pals with a couple guys in the office...they'd go have coffee whenever they felt like it at a nearby restaurant.

Everybody in the building HATED MY FUCKING GUTS at my last gig...they were all Catholics and Baptists and were convinced I was a Satanist (I'm not...but if I were a joiner I might be)...and if we got up and waltzed out the door for any reason we'd be likely terminated. Coffee breaks were short and we were constantly watched.

So I'm supposed to feel sorry for Mike Judge's frustrated schmoe??

HHmm??? The poor fellow had to work at a job he felt was monotonous and unchallenging...OH THE POOR LITTLE FUCKING BABY!!! I would've sliced off a couple fingers in exchange for a reasonable paying permanent job in a plush cubicle MONOTONOUS OR NOT!!! FUCK being "challenged". My heart beat at the rate of 100-115 beats per minute as I sat in my sawed off cubicle at that job...I was constantly in fear of having a heart attack and having to suffer the indignity of dying in a helpless fetal position as my co-workers laughed.

On the other hand "Office Space" featured Mike Judge in a cameo role as a restaurant supervisor who wasn't satisfied with an employee who did her job well...she had to pretend to HIS satisfaction that she LOVED the job and was full of pep and joy at work. NOW THAT is the kind of boss I usually had to deal with.

Unfortunately, we only see this character a couple times in the film.

The main character works for a boss who walks around with a coffee mug acting mellow. He's a JERK....but he's the kinda guy who backs down if you challenge him. Hell's fucking bells....can I work in that office?? PLEASE??

At the end of the film the former office worker has been employed by a blue collar work crew shoveling stuff around outdoors. He seems to be enjoying himself as the credits begin to roll. How could that be if he feels such a burning need for "meaningful employment"? I tried working manual labor jobs a few times over the years. Some worked out ok...some were disastrous...but one fact remained consistent. If you're an "intellectual" type working a blue collar job you'd better not be caught with a book during lunch hour. You're expected to wolf down the chow in your lunch bucket and then sit around and be sociable with the rest of the crew by yakking about yard work, football, yard work, basketball, yard work, the bad meal your Wife served you last night, yard work, yard work, yard work YARD WORK. If you're sitting somewhere reading a book while the rest of the crew is busting each others balls about the same old silly shit it won't be long before you're gonna be perceived as "uppity". Non-readers HATE IT when people read. Blue collar guys tend to get PISSED OFF if you start knocking religion or openly admit to having gay friends. Bottom line, I'd rather drink beer after work with blue collar guys than office workers since I'm used to tip toeing around verboten subjects...but I came nearly to blows with more blue collar morons over the years than back stabbing white collar office creeps.

I expect that someday somebody will eventually make a competent film exploring the boss-employee relationship without pulling punches. I hope when they do they make sure to explore the utter worthlessness of 95% of classified ads you see in newspapers. They're deceptive as hell...to put it mildly. The most humiliating moments of my life have been during job interviews...without doubt.

Oddly enough I held a few jobs in which I interviewed people and

chose who to hire. I gradually learned the truth that often the people who know how to dazzle interviewers and "play the game" turn out to be lousy, suckass employees as opposed to folks who don't have interview skills but have a WORK ETHIC. I tended to hire misfits who would WANT to be loyal to me because I looked past their "weird" qualities that made them undesirable to squarehead christian employers. There should be more bosses in the world like me...but of course we KNOW that's NEVER gonna happen.

At any rate, I'd like to see the next millionaire musician who records a light hearted "work" song sentenced to a year or so working in my old cubicle next to the half dozen old ladies who made my life a living hell...YAP YAP YAPPING like a pack of senile dogs every time I wore a black dress shirt or walked in with a bandaged wound from playing a rowdy show the night before or insulted them by reading a book in the lunch room or made any comment questioning their goofy ways such as all chiming in with "BLESS YOU!!" every time anybody sneezed; they'd do precisely 15 "BLESS YOU's" if somebody had a sneezing fit and sneezed 15 times.

FUCK. I'm getting pissed off again focusing on those old cunts. Over and fucking out. Contact me at:

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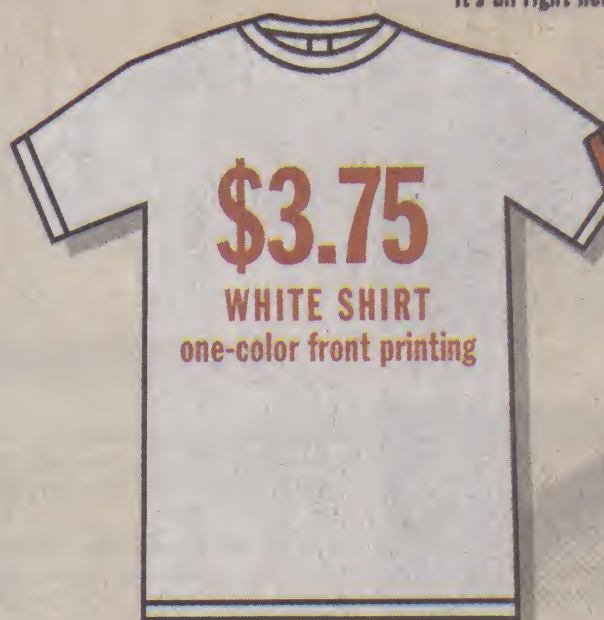
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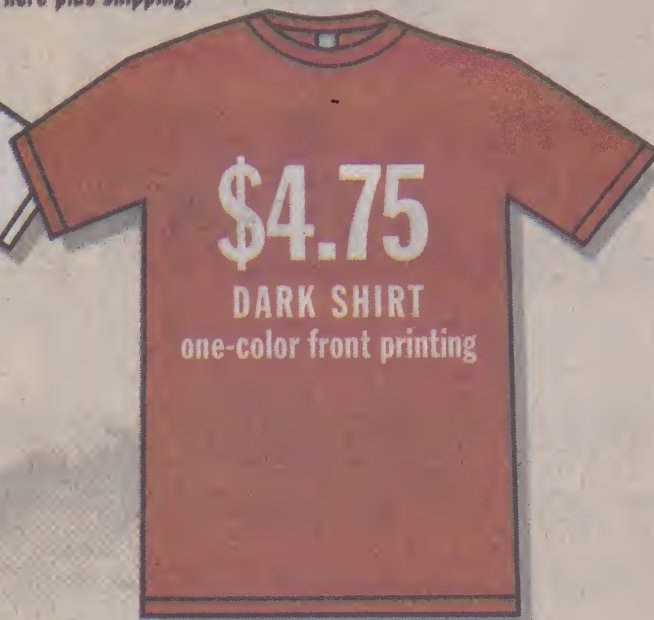
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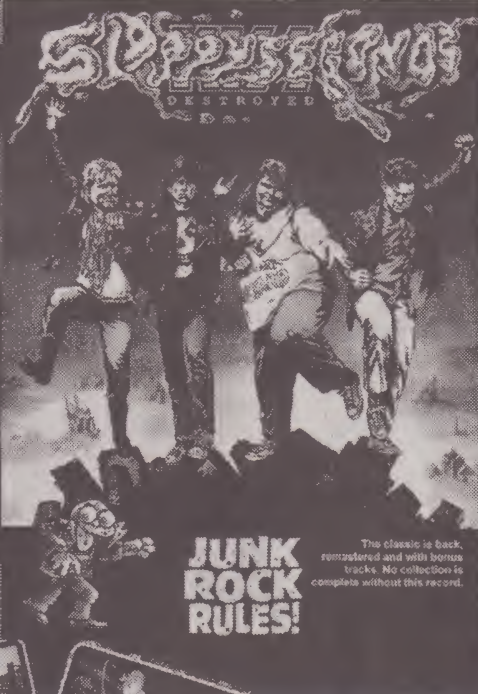


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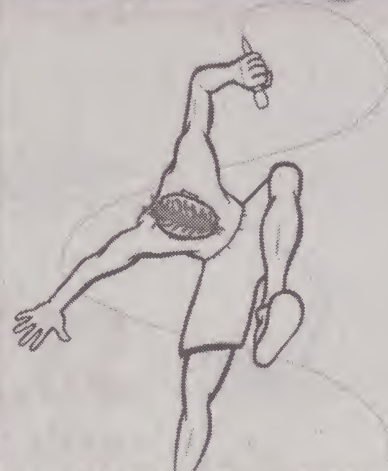


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Salad Days thrusts the reader into an emotionally charged reading experience. It is a book I now consider one of the finest I've ever read. - *punkrockreviews.com*

Salad Days is, in a word, amazing. I can't describe how much of an effect this book has had on me. Nothing else I've ever read has so clearly interpreted the life of a punk, and told it so entertainingly. - *Twenty Inches eZine*

Kick-ass novel about discovering punk rock. This well-written book is instantly recognizable to any punker. - *Alternative Tentacles Records*

Salad Days is a beautifully told story. I don't think I can come close to doing this book justice in such a short review, but please, trust me, it's fucking fantastic and I can't recommend it highly enough. - *Electrocution Distribution, Australia*

Salad Days is amazing...a must-read for any fan of the punk/hardcore genre. - *Through These Eyes eZine*

Salad Days is honest, poignant, romantic, and a fast read. I highly recommend it. - *Aimee Cooper, author of Coloring Outside The Lines*

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ODD PROJECT



By Kristopher Todd Upjohn

“Genre-bending” seems to be a big thing of late and one of the places where it can be seen to be quite active is in the emerging genre of “post-hardcore,” which is basically the next evolutionary step for such styles as emo and hardcore, which share similar roots. One of the bands doing this whole blending thing is Odd Project, whose new CD is called “Second Hand Stopped.” Band member Matt Lamb shared a few answers to a few of my questions recently, and I found that among the bands blurring category lines, Odd Project’s reasons are as pure as any.

“Well, as individuals, we all listen to different music. When we write, we all have different inputs and ideas from the genres we listen to,” Matt told me. Fusing these seemingly disparate styles may seem difficult, but when you consider that emo and hardcore both essentially grew from the same rule of music - punk - you realize it’s maybe not such a stretch. As for the third element running through Odd Project’s music, metal, there’s nothing so “odd” about fusing it with punk or hardcore or

even melody (emo, in this case).

“When we write music, we don’t sit down and say, ‘This is going to be a hardcore part, or this is going to be metal,’ ” Matt said. “We just write whatever comes out and what we feel. If it’s more hardcore, emo or metal, it’s because we just feel it at that time. We write music that we enjoy playing.”

So-called purists are often the first to whine when different flavors are mixed, so naturally it was possible Odd Project could be a target of that. Are they? “Not

so much. We really didn’t start out saying, ‘Let’s create such a genre-bending sound.’ It just sort of came out of us ... it’s kinda like our child.”

As for this whole post-hardcore thing, does a band like Odd Project - obviously not overly concerned about what categorical bin they’re dropped in at the music store - consider itself post-hardcore? Does it even consider itself in such an analytical way?

“I guess,” Matt replied to the post-hardcore thing, but “we don’t really like to label ourselves as anything really. We’d rather leave it up to the listener to decide. So many people judge bands by what genre without even listening to them, and we don’t want that to happen to us.”

I already know the answer to this, given Matt’s previous answers, but let’s throw the question out there anyhow, huh? I noted that in the band’s music, metal seems to be a lesser element than the hardcore and emo. Deliberate? “It was probably just what we were listening to/feeling at the time. But metallic

is good." Damn right it is. Ahem.

Now, for my stupid question of the interview. Do fans seem to appreciate the melding of styles Odd Project represents? "I'm assuming yes, if they are fans."

Gosh, his answer makes my question seem so ... duh! When a band brings together styles between which are tall fan fences, as is the case with emo and hardcore - ironic given the common ancestor - you have to ask: Do fans cross the fences from both of these styles to get to Odd Project? "Since we don't like to categorize ourselves too much, I'd have to say yes," was Matt's reply. "Hopefully, people from all different genres can find something they enjoy in our music." What about getting dissed by "fans" ... every happen?

"Yeah, then we bitch slap them ... not really. But yes, there is the occasional negativity, and since everyone is a critic, it's pretty much expected. Not everyone is going to like everything. So far, though, we've gotten more positivity." Moving on, Matt said more musical multiplicity could be expected from the band in future: "We are already writing some new stuff for our next album. All I can really say is look out for even more



diversity. We definitely won't be putting out the same CD twice."

Final thoughts?

"Life's too short to piss and moan. Go pick up our CD at a store near you and enjoy your life a little more. Pop in

the CD and drift away to a happier place, forget about the time you caught your Grandma sleeping with your second uncle's sister's boyfriend. Incest sucks. Oh, and come to your shows! Thanks." ■

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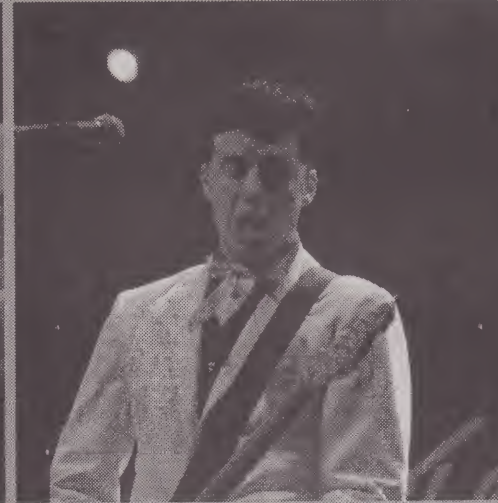
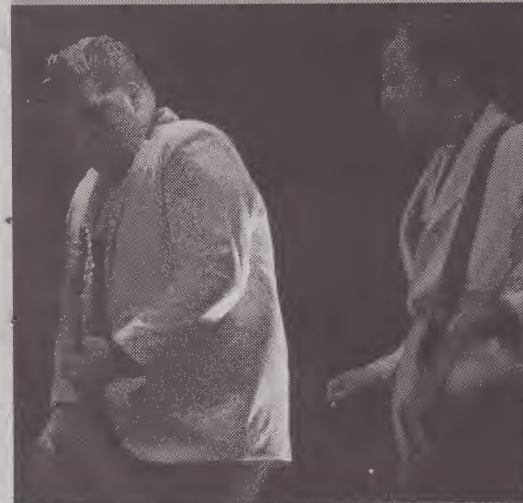
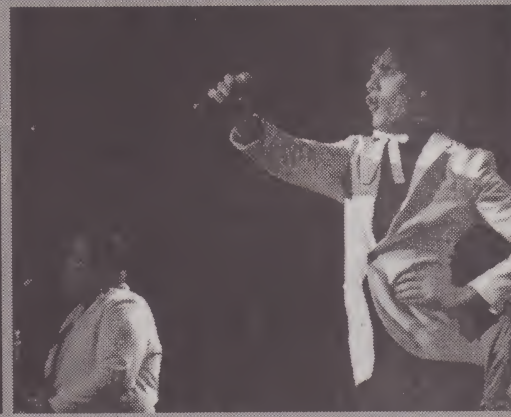
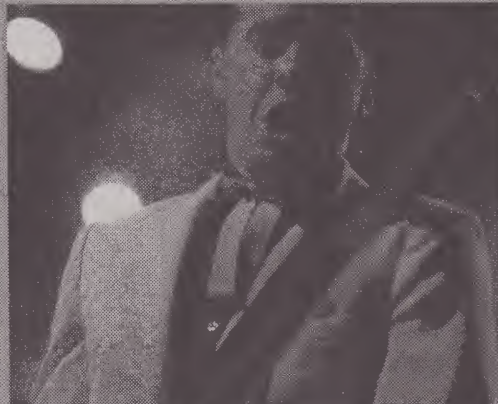
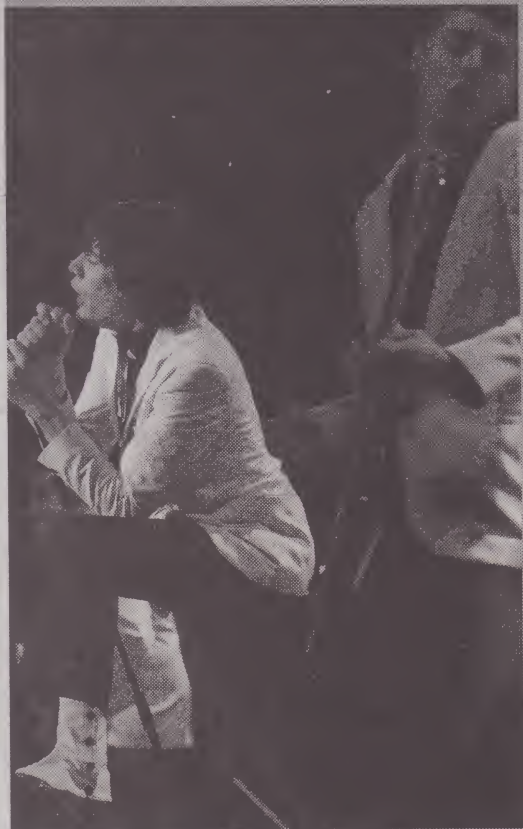
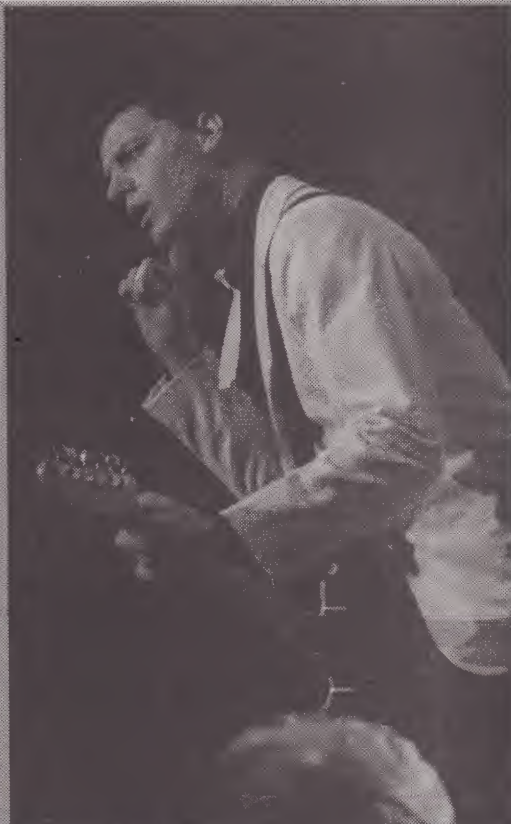
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BURNTHE8TRACK

AN INTERVIEW WITH VOCALIST DEREK KUN

By Leia Vellner

Burnthe8track are one of the newest additions to Abacus Recordings, a label who from the get-go have had a diverse roster, but with BT8T solidify a foothold in the area of indie / emo / rock. Their forthcoming CD, *The Ocean*, celebrates poppy, melodic sensibilities while planting a firm foot in some driving, rock riffs. With nothing but touring on their minds, you're certain to see them at some point during 2004 and beyond!

Please give a brief blo of how the band started...and how you know and met the other members...

In 2001 I started the band with my brother Jason and longtime friends Sam and Kevin. We had always hung out together and the timing was right so we started working on songs over the winter in Kev's basement. The next thing you know, we were recording and playing tons of shows. Soon after Kevin decided he would be unable to do a lot of touring and felt it might be best to look for a replacement. We did some touring with another good friend, Buck on Bass but soon decided on Mike as a

full time member.

How is the music scene in Winnipeg, Canada - what are some of the bigger bands that kids are crazy about?

It's GREAT! Winnipeg is a very cold place and a desolate area so there is a lot of creativity. It is always thriving. Propagandhi and The Weakerthans are a few of the major bands but there are also young bands coming up on the scene. (And there are two punk rock record labels: G7 - (which is Propagandhi's label) and Small Man Records). A few of the younger bands

that are doing well are Comeback Kid and the Projectors.

How does Burnthe8track do in Winnipeg?

Really well! We tour a lot too and usually do very well.

Do you have any tour plans for the summer?

We have a CD release party May 20 in Canada and then we leave for tour right away. We are doing about 3 weeks in Canada (and come back through Toronto)...Then we come back to Winnipeg and then go out to the east coast in mid June to mid July, then out to the west coast in August!!!

Are you nervous about touring in the US?

We did the Midwest about two years ago - we did showcases for labels. It was good and tour was a lot of fun! But this will be our 1st major tour in the US.

Since you have been to the US, what is your favorite city to play in?



I have always had great experiences in the US except for Flint Michigan. I love playing shows on both coasts. Love shows in New York and Philly and love shows all along the West Coast as well.

On June 1, your album, *The Ocean* was released. Are you excited?

Yea, definitely, because we have been waiting since August - along time for it. We are excited to get back on the road and have the album finally come out.

How do you feel about the recording?

We really like it. Justin Coop did really well. It took over a month in the studio with 15 hours a day - but it is the best recording.

What made you decide to sign to Abacus Recordings?

We had our first EP "shopped" around to major labels and got some good interest but we liked the way that Abacus Records approached us.

Your album is named *The Ocean*, and there is a song called *The Ocean*.... what importance does the ocean have in your life?

That is funny because we live in the prairies, so we are pretty far from the ocean. The ocean is a symbol. The water is the intensity of the ocean and is pretty important because I enjoy being near the ocean and getting away from everything.

Your music is catchy / rocking / and ... mellow, what music genre would you classify yourselves as? And what other bands would you

compare yourselves to?

I don't know! That is the hardest question ever. Some people consider us to be like Dag Nasty, which I am thrilled about and Hot Water Music. And U2 and The Police in our musical parts - I do not like to be in a pigeon hold, I like to be classified as all different kinds of music!

Tell me a funny band experience...

About a year and a half ago we were in LA doing a bunch of showcases. On one of the bills we ended up playing with a band fronted by the largest transvestite I have ever seen. During the performance HE / SHE took a serious liking to our bass player and was basically manhandling him on stage. After the show, while I was discussing our future with a number of label reps I witnessed this love hungry psycho pin Buck down in an attempt to force-feed him the fleshy goodness. That was the night we met the president of Century Media and owner of Abacus Recordings. I think they were so impressed they felt they had to sign us.

Is there a specific fest that Burnthe8track would like to play this summer?

Anywhere the kids are at. We just love playing shows. It doesn't matter if it's in front of five people or five thousand.

What is your favorite tour snack / food?

We eat so much crap, so now we go to grocery stores. That is a tough question. Ahhh, good Mexican food! There is no good Mexican food in Canada so whenever we are in CA or out west we eat

Mexican!

What is your favorite album of all time to rock out and dance it up to... and what is the whole band's favorite album of the year (so far in 2004)....?

That is such a tough question. I would have to say I have a few favorite albums of all time. Dag Nasty's *Can I Say*, Gorilla Biscuits' *Start Today*, Iron Maiden's *Number of the Beast*, Bad Brains' *Banned in D.C.*, Jawbreaker's *Dear You*, Sensefield's *Building* and of course, Van Halen's 1984. Favorite album in 2004? Probably The Weakerthans' *Deconstruction Site*. We share a practice space with them in Winnipeg and can't stop listening to this album while on the road.

For your next tour, if you were able to get a mega hooked up tour bus what amenities and fun stuff would you want?

A shower!!! I need a shower two to three times a day on tour. And my own bed! For fun?... A 24-hour hockey station!

If there was one person you would want to mud wrestle who would it be?

Deelite. Have you ever seen her without makeup? She is smoking hot!!!

So what do you think the future holds for Burnthe8track?

I'm not to sure, we just want to tour and keep making music and be able to survive on our music. ☛

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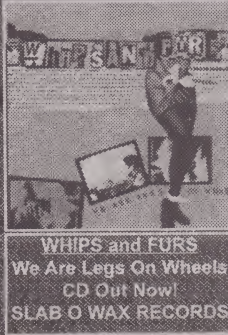
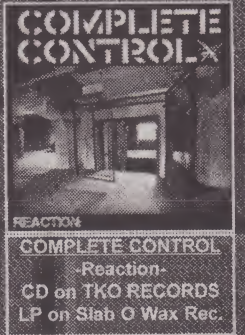
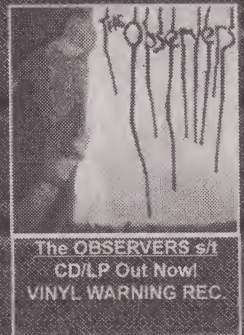
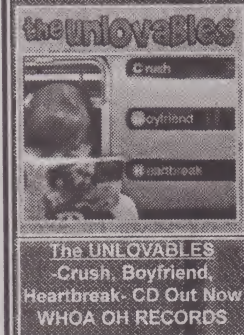
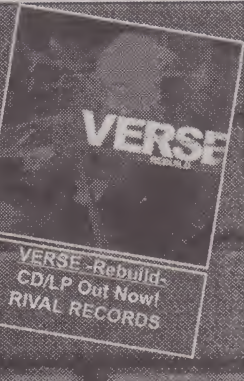
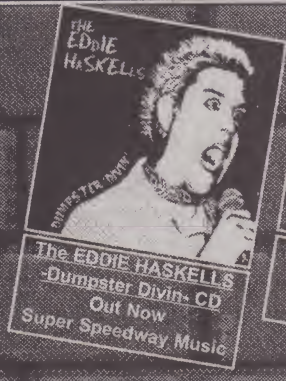
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TIGER ARMY



By Don Sill

With every great album comes many great challenges—Obstacles to overcome, barriers to cross and problems to solve. Tiger Army's "III: Ghost Tigers Rise" was no exception. Making their latest album on Hellcat Records, the psychobilly trio from California were forced to endure their greatest challenge ever after their drummer, Fred Hell, was shot four times in March 2003 in a brutal home invasion robbery that nearly left the drummer dead.

AMP spoke with singer/ guitarist Nick 13 about the making of "III: Ghost Tigers Rise" and the trials and tribulations that came along with it.

It wasn't easy making "III: Ghost Tigers Rise." Your drummer, Fred Hell went through some rough times after being shot a bunch of times. What the hell happened?

He actually got shot. We came off the road in 2002 after about a year and a half of

touring and that January we started working on material for the new record. In March [Hell] was in a friend's apartment where there was a home invasion robbery and the result was him getting shot four times.

Damn...

Basically, I was still writing at the time and we decided to take a few months off from recording and see if he could recover and see what was gonna happen. He actually got back behind the drum kit about three months later, like a form of physical therapy, it took him a while to get his strength back up. We practiced for a few months and we thought he had fully recovered but after we started cutting the album in early September we realized that his recovery wasn't as complete as we thought and...

He still has a bullet lodged in his head, right?

Yeah, he has a bullet in his brain and it's more dangerous to attempt to remove it than to just leave it where it is.

Does that bother him or what?

No, man, he can't feel it. It doesn't really effect anything that we're aware of.

So, this is a real miracle that Fred's



even alive let alone playing the drums.

Yeah, definitely.

Did they ever catch the guys who did this?

I believe they just recently arrested a guy and I think they're gonna put him on trial pretty soon.

I'll tell you this, Fred is like the 50 Cent of the punk world.

Definitely.

I'm glad he's back and playing and everything. He's back in full force, right?

Yeah, we did our first tour with Rancid back in November and December and we just finished a 30 show tour with him back in April and May. He sounds great behind the kit.

Lets get into this new album, "III: Ghost Tigers Rise" it kicks, man. What would you say is the overall feel of this album?

Well, you know, it's always kind of hard for me to say it because I'm always so close to it. I found that people who've listened to the other albums, friends, fans, whatever, they always pick up a lot more of the differences than I do because, to me, it's all coming from the same place and it's all Tiger Army. But I will say that there are some differences with feel on this record, one of the things is that we slowed it down a little bit to kind of like a more mid-tempo approach.

Why the change?

One of the reasons was because "Power

Of Moonlight" was recorded too fast in the first place and then we'd play it even faster live and basically it was losing some of it's vibe, some of it's power and some of it's groove. We're not a thrash band so we wanted to get more of that feel in there.

Bring more of that Tiger Army sound into it.

Yeah, man.

What is the driving force behind some of these tunes?

Well, that's another tough question. A lot of my lyrics tend to come from an almost subconscious place. Sometimes a key word will get me going and then let it take me where it wants to take me. I never sit down and try and write a song about this or that.

It just all flows like a stream on consciousness?

Yeah, in a way.

What mindset do you have to be in to write? Or does that even matter?

It does but it's really hard to explain. It's not attached to mood. It's almost a state like dreaming where it's a little bit out of ordinary consciousness, it's a little bit right next to daydreaming. You can't always tap into that and turn it on and off when you want to.

You guys have been out playing live and doing your thing. Must feel great.

It does, you know, especially after all that time in the studio to get back on the road and do what we love most which is playing live.

The kids of have been very welcoming.

Yeah, it was great to be back.

What can kids who may not be familiar with Tiger Army expect when they come to see you guys live?

Well, we put out a lot of energy on stage and some people are surprised by how aggressive it all is live. We're a three-piece so we don't have the luxury of kicking back and letting a singer run all over the place and making it exciting. Basically our music is inspired by a lot of things, but I would say that the attitude live is more of an old-school, hardcore vibe.

Yeah, you guys have a hardcore edge with a Stray Cats vibe. Is that fair to say?

Yeah, that's one way to look at it. I think we definitely grew up watching shows where stuff was going off and that's where we're coming from when we're on stage, that kind of energy.

What the main thing you want kids to remember about Tiger Army.

There's a certain feeling that music gives you sometimes where it almost it's hard to explain...it's beyond words. But, it's almost a sense of being alive and life is amplified. It's adrenaline and chills and a feeling that really lets you know you're there and that you're alive. That's the feeling that my favorite music has always given me and if I could give people that feeling then that's what I'd like.

For more on Tiger Army log to: www.tiger-army.com 

RAPID FIRE

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PROFILE: ANODYNE

By Peewee

NAME:

Michael Hill

POSITION IN THE BAND:

Guitarist? Singer-guy.

HOMETOWN:

Brooklyn, NY

ANODYNE SOUNDS LIKE:

Black Flag if Ian Curtis was the frontman.

OUR LABEL (LEVEL-PLANE) IS COOL BECAUSE:

Is cool because: they put out really great records and work hard.

FOUR CD'S THAT ARE INFLUENCING ME THE MOST RIGHT NOW:

"Damaged"-Black Flag, "Reign in Blood" - Slayer, "Unknown Pleasures" - Joy Division, "Jackson" - Tar

BEST THING TO DO IN THE VAN IS:

Drive and think about girls.

WORST DRIVING INCIDENT INVOLVED:

Mechanical wear and thermal expansion.

NEW YORK CITY HAS INFLUENCED OUR MUSIC IN THE SENSE THAT:

You can feel lonely even though there are millions of people surrounding you.

THE KIDS THESE DAYS ARE:

Fat, lazy and watch too much TV (for the most part).

BEST BAD

RELIGION DISC?

I really dislike Bad Religion.

UPCOMING TOURS

OR RELEASES:

"Lifetime of Gray Skies" LP on Level Plane; just completed a US tour in August and September 2004.

WHEN WE'RE NOT ON TOUR WE EARN OUR LIVING BY:

I engineer music for commercials; Josh and Joel hold down office jobs.

FAVORITE THING ABOUT PLAYING SHOWS:

Being able to go for it every night like it's the last chance I'll ever get.

BAND THAT STILL GIVES ME THE CHILLS WHEN I SEE THEM LIVE:

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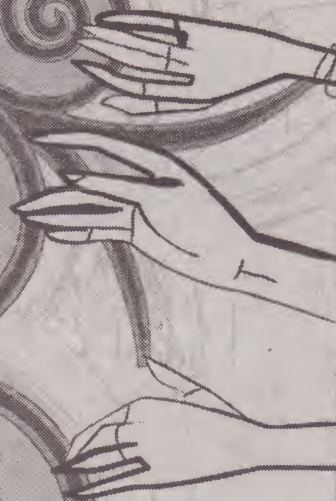


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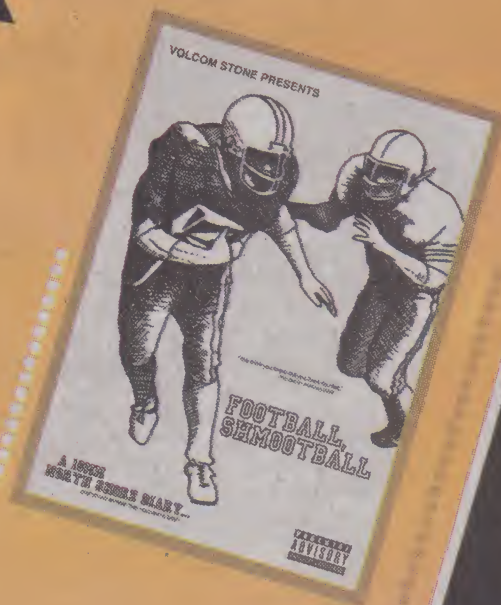


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THE START

Beginning Their Own Audio Destiny

By Jeff Alexander

The Start's Aimee Echo resounds with positive energy and possesses enough sensual dynamism to solve California's energy crisis. The Start have successfully reached another

creative height thanks to the synth-driven hooks fueled by the growth of Jamie Miller.

"With regards to the new record, *Initiation*, it's just letting go of the pre-conceived notion of what the band is supposed to be and going 'This feels

right.' It's quite liberating because Aimee and I have been working on this record for awhile," stated Miller.

Echo's vocal delivery reveals a breathy urgency that's supported by The Start's segues of infectious power that demand

a listener to dance and celebrate sonic communion.

"Feeling like an outsider can be dangerous to your health," Echo stated in all sincerity.

Initiation begins with "Like Days". As Echo emphatically declares, "I might be dead..."



Photo: Trisha Leeper

198 AMP

"The meanings of the songs change when people tell me things. [The lyrics] takes on a life of its own when you sing it every night..."

the proclamation is vetoed because the song stands as a prelude to a record composed by a band that has undeniably given birth to a new kind of creativity. The Start have completed their newest initiation, and the result is a fresh voice and identity. Within *Initiation*, The Start triumphantly compound the subtle with the brash, the sincerity with the coy, and the pain with desperation for alleviation by supporting these themes with stark sonic variance and hypnotic cadence.

Rising from the ashes of The Human Waste Project, Aimee Echo has demonstrated that refining one's individual performance can greatly benefit a band. Her excitement surrounding The Start's resilience remains unquestioned, regardless of the band's major label contract being reneged.

"We got up off our asses and I realized nobody killed us, it was in our hands and I felt a sense of pride," said Echo smiling. Aimee's electric smile has the unique strength to engage a listener, much like The Start's music. After The Start's major label stint ended, the band found themselves a new home with Nitro Records, and enlisted Erick Sanger and Billy Brimblecorn Jr. to complete the new rhythm section.

Aimee's lyrical approach on their Nitro debut, *Death Via Satellite* shifted to a more politically conscious narrative, as exemplified in songs like "Death Via Satellite" and "Los Angeles," a discordant track that shares the desperation and anger of X's "Los Angeles." As Aimee gleefully stated "Air quality in my town is next to nothing," its revealed that Echo herself isn't choking on the stench of mediocrity, but the very city that was once the denizen of glitz & glamour continuing its downward spiral, as the suffering streets of West Hollywood beckoned for spare change during my afternoon visit.

Echo concluded that her politically charged lyrics on *Death Via Satellite* were a result from the election of George W. Bush. "Can you call it an election? It was a strange and devastating moment in my

life. I sat with the band on my couch till three o'clock in the morning, freaking out about what was going on. For me, I never really strongly believed in American government as it was. Our basis of our government was completely stripped bare."

"You have to work so hard just to survive. There was a sort of comfort level during the Clinton years, though I kept my ear to the ground politically. I think the politics that are going on in our country right now are frightening," declared Aimee, as she moved forward in her chair for effect.

As the alienation of America continues, Echo was proud to share that some young fans once approached her and said that after seeing The Start they no longer felt like outsiders.

"When I was growing up, music was everything to me, it's been a moving experience for me."

As she continued eating her meal, I felt charmed by her ability to make me feel like I have known her longer than an afternoon.

After clearing her black and white hair from her face, Aimee reflected on her stage experience in England. "After a couple of songs I felt I had to keep pushing myself to compensate for my lack of penis," she giggled. Perhaps one way to get an audience to respond is to antagonize them, and with a sly smile, Aimee continued. "So, I said to the crowd, 'looks like some of you never saw a girl before,' and spontaneously there was a chant of my name, which I didn't really notice it when it happened. I then realized that at least 50,000 people were chanting 'Aimee! Aimee!' it was a very weird and surreal moment in my life."

Though she quietly dismisses the impacting experience with a light hearted shrug, it's clear that she was sincerely flattered.

The Start's struggle for a circle of unity began with the inclusion of a quote by the poet E. Markham, which first appeared in the liner notes of *Shakedown!*, the band's 2001 debut.

Markham's declaration "They called me heretic and flout and drew a circle to keep me out, but wit and I with will to win drew a bigger circle to bring them in" was adopted as The Start's statement of intent.

I informed Aimee that E. Markham's name arose in a 1987 lawsuit that alleged a Tennessee school violated the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment. The students involved in *Mozert v. Hawkins City Board of Education* were admirers of Markham's work. Aimee grinned and was happy to learn that the plaintiff parents were awarded \$50,000 in damages, "Fantastic lawsuit!" exclaimed Aimee.

Following my lead, Aimee gave me a walk through her formidable junior high school years.

"It was an open book test. We could bring study materials, so I brought Cliff Notes. In theory, we could bring study materials," said Echo smiling harmlessly. She happily told me she was promptly thrown out of the classroom, and later thrown out of school for being insubordinate.

As I challenged Aimee to be introspective she decided that it was only fair to analyze me. "I assume by looking at you that you've been an outsider in your life," stated Professor Echo.

"It's an assumption!" said Echo sheepishly, as she tried to muffle her trademark giggle. Aimee's giggle brings to mind a shy teenage girl crossed with a boisterous individual who's comfortable in conversation, though her attempts to stifle it proved to be futile.

As I introduced my theory that Aimee continues to address the idea of a 'mystery man' in her lyrics, she quickly offered another trademark giggle, with no apologies.

"That's really interesting because I hadn't noticed that. That's really funny, it's definitely not intentional. The meanings of the songs change when people tell me things. It [the lyrics] takes on a life of its own when you sing it every night."

Initiation stands apart from The Start's previous records because the images within Echo's newest writings are

more lyric, which are in marked contrast from her previous exploration of political consciousness in *Death Via Satellite*. The vitality has been sharpened to reveal a more concise image of turmoil, as subtlety has given way to more macabre narratives complimented by haunting rhythms that still possess the power to engage a listener. The Start embrace their dark side, yet sharpened to reveal a more infectious compositions that remain melodic. The subjects addressed within each song almost feel like vignettes of the visceral. Echo's affirmation of "All or Nothing" feels like an ultimatum, can dedicated fans parallel the leap The Start have successfully landed? It's a risky leap because *Initiation's* overall theme counters the pop hooks within *Shakedown!* and even makes the discordance of *Death Via Satellite* appear more tame.

"It's (*Initiation*) us being us more than we've ever been. It's basically an ultimatum. The record is basically a reaction to what we've been dealing with for the past few years," stated Miller.

"I think it's more of an invitation to join us," offered Echo.

On the surface, one may believe The Start's newest composition comes from so far away and is unlike their previous offerings, it is. However, a careful listen shows an almost organic progression. The haunting narrative within "Trinity," which completed *Death Via Satellite* is almost reprised within *Initiation's* swan song, "You, Me And A Knife". Echo's breathy urgency is restrained and complimented by stray pieces of hypnotic overtones, as she traverses the exhausting inner chaos with a hope for alleviation.

"I feel like we made the record we always wanted to make," declared Echo.

As Aimee and I hugged goodbye, I realized The Start's future looked as bright as her red eye shadow.

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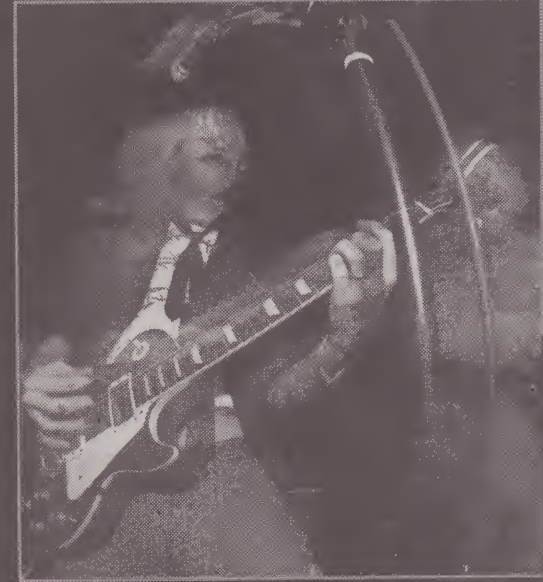
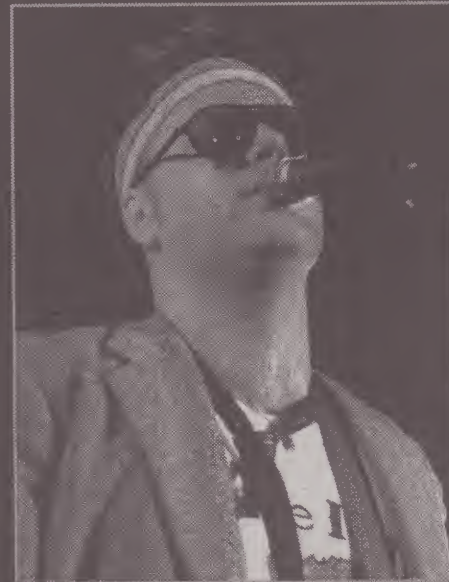
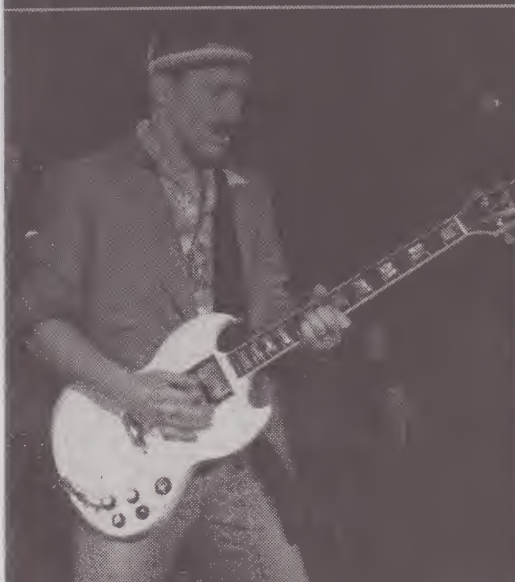
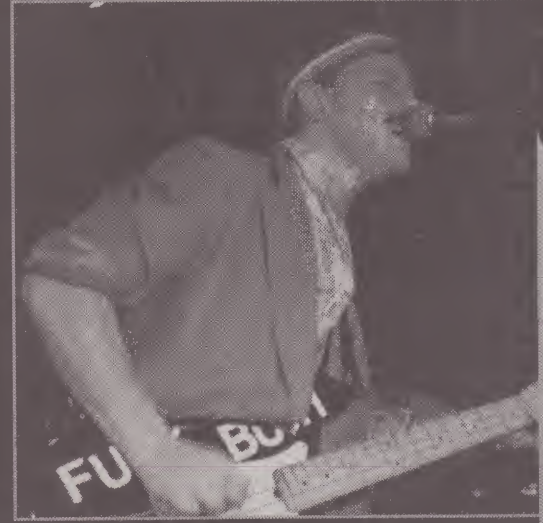
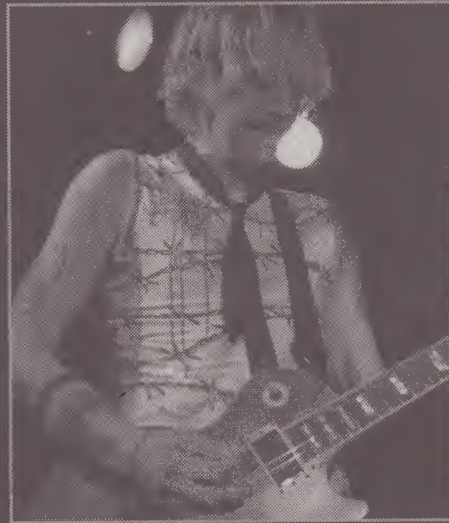
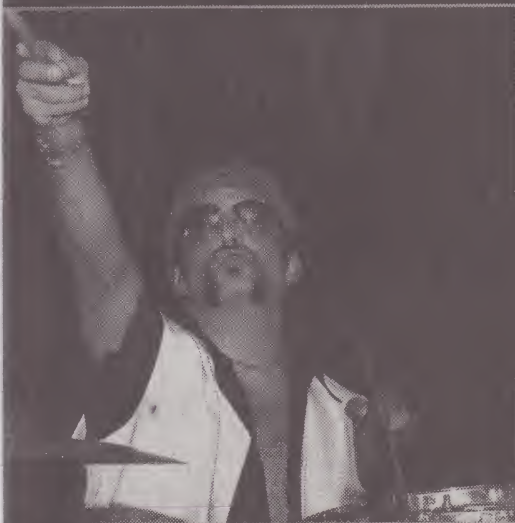
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THE FAZOLIS





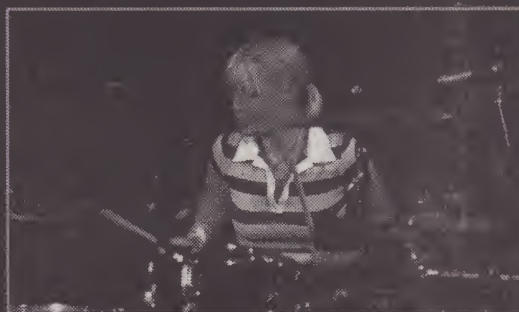
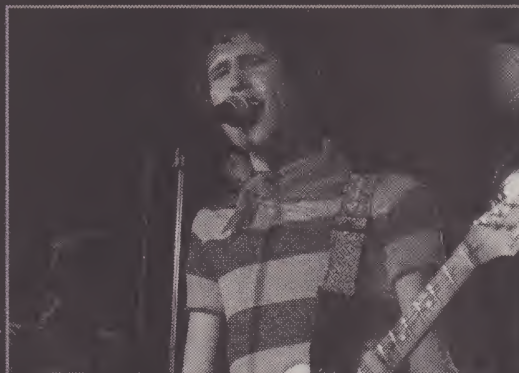
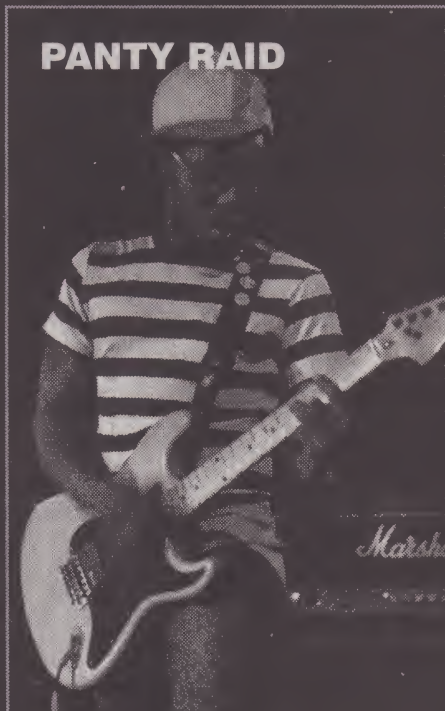
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PANTY RAID



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The Gathering Storm

BRAZIL



By Tiffany Chow

It's rough being a band. You will be hard-pressed to find anybody who would contest that fact. Everyday new difficulties must be endured; each show or album brings more criticism to bear; and all along hard choices must be made in regard to priorities. There are expectations to meet, options to consider, and a constant pressure from several directions. Those that can survive the consistent struggles seem to pass a test, one that is rewarded with success, fans, and the chance to live out your dreams. Brazil is one of the few bands who seems to be tested inexhaustibly, and amazingly, continues to pass with flying colors. What is it about this six-piece from Indiana that has allowed them to come this far?

Maybe it is the unique blend of people in the band. Jonathon Newby (vocals) says that we are all very different people with different tastes. Each member of the band seems to run in different circles, as Newby puts it. Though they all are friends, they rarely

hang out on a regular basis. What ties these extremely different people together is a common desire to pursue music as a career. The common thread is that we want to make something work and are [all] willing to do what it takes to make it, Newby says. This

determination comes not only from a common passion for music, but also from a good healthy dose of Midwestern work ethic, as Newby calls it.

The different backgrounds each member comes from allows Brazil to produce the distinctive sound that has set the band apart in an industry that forever faces the threat of mediocrity and staleness. Their individual sound could also be the reason for Brazil's endurance. Each member's taste is drastically diverse from the other members. All the way from classic jazz to contemporary indie artists like Ben Folds and Belle & Sebastian, the range of likes within Brazil is broad. Newby contributes their unique sound to a mix of deliberation and chance. The sound is about 60%



deliberately sought after, and 40% luck of the draw, he says. If it were not for this diversity within the band, Newby says things would get stale and boring like a lot of music these days.

If Brazil's determination cannot be contributed to the members' diverse backgrounds and personalities, maybe it is the way the band has been able to withstand the various pressures within the industry. From the get-go, the band received a lot of attention and a considerable hype built up. This could have turned into what happens to so many young and naive bands. The novelty of attention and buzz gives way to false confidence. When the industry's fickleness causes the attentions to be withdrawn, a band is often times unable to withstand the disappointment.

Fortunately for Brazil, they were able to avoid this well-known fate, but not without some hardships. Here we were with our name on the tip of lots of people's tongues, but at the same time we're all still dirt-broke and people didn't really turn out to our shows in droves. Newby confesses, there was this weird dichotomy of what we were hearing about and what was actually taking

place. Brazil was able to see the hype for what it truly was. They eventually signed to Southern Californian label Fearless, but even then the pressure was present. As time went on, we had all these different people telling us what the label should be doing and shouldn't be doing and all these expectations got bent out of shape things we're a little rough for a bit, Newby explains, it put a lot of pressure where it shouldn't have been. Certain people wanted us to be the next big-buzz-band knockoff and it seemed for a while there we couldn't do anything right.

Consequently, the release of the first EP was a bit premature, both in the maturity of the band and the songs. The new LP released on April 20, 2002, shows Brazil's ability to grow despite rough starts. A Hostage and the Meaning of Life is not only more mature, but also more tight as Newby describes it. It is possible that Brazil's triumph could be due to this ability to progress. The band approached the writing of the new album seriously, and the result is very expressionistic, a completely internalized monologue (although sometimes a dialogue), Newby


describes. I want people to hear it [and] be able to connect to the themes and be enraptured by the imagery. In regards to the growth of Brazil on the new album, I feel like we're only starting to tap into our personality as a whole, he states. I almost feel like no one has seen the real us yet. It goes without saying that a healthy recognition that perfection can never be reached adds to their character.

We won't ever say that we've finally arrived and are done. If we get to that point, it will probably be Bye-bye, Brazil, Newby admits. The growth undergone between the EP and the LP may not be the end of the journey for Brazil, but it certainly produced a remarkable album. Though it is no surprise to any outsider, Newby humbly concedes the reception to the new album has been amazingly positive.

Although all of these inimitable qualities contribute to Brazil's outstanding endurance, it is arguably their fervent enthusiasm about their music that plays the most significant role. At any show and within each song on the new album, it is clear that Brazil approaches music with exhausting energy. Even with the anticipation of their first nationwide tour of considerable magnitude (accompanying acts like Coheed and Cambria, Sparta, and RX Bandits), an undeniable eagerness is evident in the band. We are very much ready [for this tour. We've] been practicing our asses off, buying up merch no stone is unturned, Newby imparts, I've been running and working out for my vocals. It is this intensity which shapes every aspect of Brazil.

We're just all intense people; we like to see things followed through with, Newby intimates. If it weren't that way, Brazil probably wouldn't have happened at all, he goes so far to say.

Brazil might be the perfect example of a determined and persevering band. Their singular qualities and traits might be the ideal recipe for a satisfying musical career. Maybe the route Brazil has taken will only work for them. Whatever the case may be, they have put out a new album worth checking out and have crafted a live show not to be missed.

www.braziltheband.com
www.fearlessrecords.com 

THE WARRIORS

AN INTERVIEW WITH VOCALIST MARSHAL



By Duncan / Givemestrength.net

If you haven't heard of the Warriors yet, I can't really blame you, but now there's no excuse. The Warriors hometown of Tehachapi California is not known for their up and coming hardcore scene. Currently, the town's only claim to fame is having the highest rate of teenage pregnancies, but The Warriors are out to change that. The Warriors are ready to take their truly unique style of traditional hardcore straight out of Tehachapi and assault the masses this summer. You can see the fury live when they play the west coast with With Or Without You, and the rest of the U.S. can see them with Shattered Realm and On Broken Wings. Be sure to pick up the Warriors debut full length on Eulogy, and check for yourself why they are one of the most promising new bands in hardcore.

The Warriors just hooked up with Eulogy. Tell me something about that.

Eulogy has been really good to us. They just gave us five grand for a bus. They are hooking us up. They are doing all our merch. We are very grateful for that. We are really stoked. We are doing a tour in August with Shattered Realm and On Broken

Wings, all over the U.S. In June we are doing a west coast tour with With Or Without You. We just put together a split 7" with them, and we used or two new songs "Transistor Resistor" and "Red, Black, and Blue." It should be out in a month or so on Straight Hate records.

When is the full length coming out?

The Eulogy full length is coming out this summer. We are writing the music right now. It should be out soon, so be on the lookout for that.

Are you going to be recording that with Vic Dicara (of Inside Out & 108)?

No. We are hooking up with the guys from No Motiv and that should be cool.

What was like recording with Vic who is a hardcore legend?

It was cool. Vic helped us out with some songs. He helped out a lot. We are really grateful for that. He has a great studio. He has a lot going for him, and he has a family. He's a great guy.

The Warriors are one of those rare bands where it is truly hard to describe their sound. How would you describe it?

We just play the music that we love, and whatever comes out comes out. Danny comes



"It's been said we are kind of hard to approach, because we keep to ourselves. We are shy dudes. Once we get on stage that is all over."

are a little metal, but we talked them in to doing some hardcore.

What do you want people who are hearing about you for the first time to know about the band?

It's been said we are kind of hard to approach, because we keep to ourselves. We are shy dudes. Once we get on stage that is all over. We just get on stage and rip it and do our thing. I wish more people would come up and meet us. People give me weird looks at shows sometimes, and I wonder if I am really that hard to talk to.

Like a "Scene Celebrity"?

We have that song, but I don't know what people think about it. It's not about anybody, it's just saying don't be that guy. It's not about anybody in particular.

Anything to say in closing?

Check out Eulogyrecordings.com and TheWarriorz.com, with a "Z", because we don't care about spelling. We got some good shit coming up, so check it out for sure. It's the best stuff we have ever come up with. We are working really hard on the full length. Once it drops, hardcore is over. I'm sorry, but that's going to be it. ☛

up with ideas, and then we work with it. We don't go for a certain style. We just do our thing. We play, then we get the fuck off stage. That's about it. No strings attached. We are just a hardcore band.

You seem to bring some hip hop influences to the band. Who are some artists that you think hardcore kids could get into?

I'm not too into hip hop right now. I used to be way into it. I listen to stuff like Gang Starr, Mobb Deep, Jedi Mind Tricks and Immortal Technique. They are groups that are doing hip hop for the right reasons. I respect a lot of hip hop groups like that. As far as mainstream rap goes, I don't care. Unless it's Snoop Dogg or Dr. Dre, but Dre hasn't done anything in awhile.

I was reading your bio, and it makes your hometown of Tehachapi sound

like hell.

Danny put all of that together, but it's all true. We have the highest percentage of teenage pregnancies. A lot of... I don't want to say white trash, but really shitty kids growing up there. Korn kids, if you know what I am saying. Lately it has been getting a lot better, because hardcore is growing there. Kids are starting to listen to the Warriors and With Or Without You. It's becoming a great place. It used to suck about a year to two ago. Diehard Youth really did a lot. They were probably our biggest influence. That was the first hardcore band I traveled with and everything. Tehachapi never had a hardcore scene before Diehard Youth. It's a really young scene with kids from the age of 15 down to 12. We are really stoked to have these kids into our band every time we play at home. It's really picking up right now with some new bands. They

RAPID FIRE

SHORT
INTERVIEWS
FOR SHORT
ATTENTION
SPANS

PROFILE: IDIOT PILOT

By Peewee

NAME:

Michael Harris

POSITION IN THE BAND:

Lead Singer

HOMETOWN:

Bellingham, WA

IDIOT PILOT SOUNDS LIKE:

A refreshing break from mall emo and pop punk.

OUR LABEL (REPRISE RECORDS) IS COOL BECAUSE:

They gave us a lot of money.

FOUR CD'S THAT ARE INFLUENCING ME THE MOST RIGHT NOW:

The Blood Brothers - Burn Piano Island Burn, Lands Farther East - There Goes The Atmosphere, Deftones - self-titled, Any Dirty Three or Mogwai album

BEST THING TO DO IN THE VAN IS:

Gameboy or Advanced Dungeons & Dragons.

WORST DRIVING INCIDENT INVOLVED:

When Steve sold our van.

BELLINGHAM HAS INFLUENCED OUR MUSIC IN THE SENSE THAT:

By being our environment, we and our music are only a product of it. Or is your environment a product of you and your mind? I'm just not sure anymore.

THE KIDS THESE DAYS ARE:

Silly, sometimes snobby and judgmental, good looking, and very self-conscious. Oh wait, that's just scenesters.

SEATTLE MARINERS OR LOS ANGELES LAKERS:

L.A. BABY!

WHAM! OR

GEORGE

MICHAEL:

Wham!, duh.

HOES OR BROS:

Hoe's brotha!

UPCOMING TOURS OR RELEASES:

"Strange We Should Meet Here" on Reprise Records, tour TBA.

WHEN WE'RE NOT ON TOUR WE EARN OUR LIVING BY:

Guest modeling.

FAVORITE THING ABOUT PLAYING SHOWS:

Jumping off really high shit, and dancing.

BAND THAT STILL GIVES ME THE CHILLS WHEN I SEE THEM LIVE:

Radiohead.

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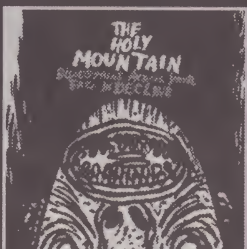
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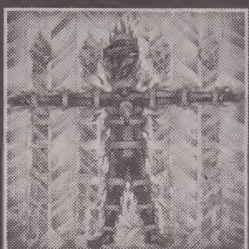
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Your Face in
Decline" 12"/CD



REHASHER
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JACK RABID

END THE NATIONAL NIGHTMARE, IT'S YOUR LAST CHANCE FOR A LONG TIME

As I believe this is the last issue (or nearabouts) before the nation hits the polls and picks who will serve as our president for the next four years, George Bush or John Kerry, I will pass along two long answers I gave in a recent interview worth the more general reading, summarizing positions I have stated in these pages of AMP before:

What issues are the most important to you in this election?

I firmly believe that the transfer of wealth from the working class to the investor class that has taken place over the last four years is the most cynical and outrageous economic flimflam perpetrated on the American people since the mass scandals of the Harding and Grant administrations. I don't believe that the upper classes were paying their assigned share of taxes to begin with, because of their ability to hire superb accountants to shield their income in shelters and most of all, gigantic expense deductions. Saving them tens of thousands more in lower rates on every form of their income makes no sense in that sense. Look at what is being cut or is being proposed: capital gains taxes, estate taxes, dividends taxes. Meanwhile, the people whose only income is their job are being bled dry but don't seem to mind as long as they get a one-time hit of \$300 and a one-percent drop in their tax rate while their local taxes go up and local services that all enjoy (rich and poor) dry up and disappear or are no longer properly maintained by broke local governments. It's even worse when the lower classes are struggling to find and keep work that pays anything worthwhile while benefits are either being jettisoned or acting as a disincentive to hire. This administration, rather than responding to these growing problems, has intentionally inflamed them and saddled us with crippling government debt going forward instead. It's so outrageous on its face, I nearly admire their PR skills at having consistently pumped their policies as somehow being good for everyone when it's clear that the benefit is almost entirely enjoyed by those who make the most, and it is saving them millions, literally.

But then again, with a poorly educated populace that apparently cares more whether they like a president rather than what he actually does, perhaps we deserve this abomination. We certainly will if we re-elect this naked policy class war against such an abundance of plain evidence to the contrary of their constant and sadly effective rosy claims of their performance.

And let's face it, whether you are a Republican or a Democrat, rich or poor, the war was a con. It was before it started (which is why I marched in the anti-war rally with a million others in Feb. 2003, and again in August 2004 with 400,000 others just before the GOP convention—I'd never before attending any march for anything!), and it has been firmly and utterly exposed since. We all know they wanted to invade Iraq before they even took office, it has nothing whatsoever to do with terrorism, the only cause they knew the people would support. Why people on the right side of

the isle/spectrum keep quiet on this and pretend like they didn't know or actually believe the phony baloney justifications is really beyond me. And there's a tremendous cost to us all for this willful myopia and forced amnesia. I live in New York and I feel no more safe with all these alerts nowadays than I did on Sept. 12, 2001.

Last night an NYPD helicopter buzzed Yankee Stadium for a solid 15 minutes while I was there and I kept wondering what they knew that I didn't. If we'd gone after the Islamic fundamentalist radicals with a third of the force we used on Hussein, maybe I wouldn't be feeling so nervous in the upper deck... Let me put it this way, since it seems to be such an issue: If you feel as safe now as you did Sept 10, 2001, I guess you should believe Bush is winning the war on terrorism, as opposed to the more accurate fact that he was in charge when we were struck and is thus accountable (just as Clinton was when the first attack on the Trade Center occurred, though thereafter he made it a priority to stop further attempts). If you feel as concerned that any day this week or next 3000 people could be killed again because Al Qaeda and Osama Bin Laden were not put out of business in any meaningful way (while 1000 of our troops have died in the streets and deserts of Iraq and another 6000 have been wounded, and the Iraqi insurgency against our occupancy shows no sign of weakening), then you should believe, as I do, that we need new leadership.

Where do you see America in the next four years?

Since I am cynical enough to believe that the political fear tactics of Karl Rove and Dick Cheney will overcome all sense and reason in this country in overt emotional appeal, I foresee four years of far worse policies from a hard right, stubborn, dogmatic, faith-based, empirical presidency that will now consider themselves to have a mandate (which they didn't since 2001) to double their policies, from more tax cuts for the investor class to lip service on educational reform while our schools go to hell. And with full control of a Congress that has abandoned its role and ability to question its own standard bearers (on both sides of the isle) in a lockjawed goosetep to rubber stamp anything no matter how harmful, so long as it conveys political advantage over the other party, they will wreak double the damage on the increasingly frail class structure, the environment, our relationships with our allies, and our poor (in both senses of the word) armed forces. Likewise our burning social problems with declining health care, rising oil prices, increased inflation, a stagnant stock market, and a possible future housing bubble and underfunded pensions and retirement programs. These could continue to worsen until they become full-fledged social crises. And our people will still be ruled by the trumping emotion of fear for our own safety rather than a levelheaded understanding of what's being done to us right in front of our eyes, with only the barest of window-dressing and platitudes to sugarize the bitter pill...

But it is still within our grasp to stand up against these forces of utter Orwellian propaganda, and insist on actual accountability in our government for its own policies, instead of endless papering over their ill effects, and the terrible gall of having them handed back to us as some kind of triumph. We can vote for Kerry. Frankly, anything is better than this. I've voted for my share of Republicans in my life, but this one is some kind of nightmare no matter what your honest politics. Whatever you do, please vote. And think first! It doesn't matter who you'd rather have a beer with, now does it? ☞

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 HYDRA HEAD FERRET VAGRANT FAT WRECK EYEBALL
 DISCHORD ROBOTIC EMPIRE SUICIDE SQUEEZE IPECAC
 POLYVINYL TRUSTKILL GSL RELAPSE TOOTH AND NAIL
 ROBOTIC EMPIRE DOGHOUSE MATADOR PROSTHETIC
 TIGER STYLE INDECISION LOAD KILL ROCK STARS
 THE MILITIA GROUP DEEP ELM DIM MAK EBULLITION
 SECRETLY CANADIAN CENTURY MEDIA ESCAPE ARTIST
 THREE ONE G SOUTHERN STILLBORN GOOD LIFE
 CHUNKSAH TRIPLE CROWN SOME SUB POP BARSUK
 FEARLESS FRENCH KISS TORTUGA DRIVE THRU INITIAL
 SOUTHERN LORD REVELATION ALONE PUNK CORE
 FUELED BY RAMEN TROUBLEMAN UNLIMITED EULOGY
 METEOR CITY EPITAPH ONE DAY SAVIOR BUDDYHEAD
 HAPPY COUPLES NEVER LAST FACEDOWN COALITION
 DEATHWISH INC. BRIDGE NINE BIG WHEEL FILE 13
 GERN BLANDSTEN SECOND NATURE NEUROT LOOKOUT!
 LOVITT BYO SOUND VIRUS GRAVITY HOPELESS
 A-F MAGIC BULLET EPITAPH ACE FU FIDDLER
 AND A WHOLE FUCKLOAD MORE OF GREAT MUSIC.

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xHit The Deckx



"I'm just wary that we're establishing rules and borders concerning open forum and that is what I want to go against," says Jordan Darby, vocalist for southern California hardcore band, Hit the Deck.

By Chris Francz

When I heard this Ventura, CA band's cover of "I Hate the Kids" by the classic DC band, S.O.A. (State of Alert), I was immediately impressed in almost the same way that I was impressed when I heard The Ataris reference Black Flag in their Top 40 hit (note: S.O.A. and Black Flag had the same vocalist). S.O.A. seemed a little more obscure to me than Black Flag though so I wanted to dig my heels in and get down to the nitty-gritty. It's easy to just try to sound cool by name-dropping a classic but seemingly-forgotten-by-most band, but to actually cover one of the band's songs was taking things a bit farther. Was the cover a novelty or a tribute?

"I don't want to romanticize the past, especially since I wasn't there, but there was an urgency in early 80's hardcore," Jordan Darby, the band's vocalist told me. "So, is Hit the Deck an old school rip-off band or are you the real deal?" I asked. "We aren't a rip-off band. We are doing what all of the bands that we like did and the bands that we like are now doing which is to play music that we see fit to play," Darby responded. "I like the early idea of hardcore, where (hardcore came) fresh out the punk rock movement, kids starting to ask 'why?' to everything - to drugs, pop culture, religion, sexuality, everything," stated Darby. "I think that now, hardcore is settling down as it's own comfortable genre and I don't know if that's

good or bad, but it just *is*. I don't know if I like the fact that you can go into any chain store and buy Barry Manilow, Britney Spears, and any given hardcore record. There's just not that secret urgency and hatred anymore. But at the same time the exposure of the music to kids everywhere is priceless. It's accessibility give us an easier way out of the 'normal' world," Darby explained.

Back to S.O.A. - I asked Darby if he felt some kind of connection to the 1980 DC hardcore scene and the whole *Flex Your Head* sound that occurred in those crucial years in the development of hardcore? "I am in love with the DC hardcore scene from 1980. I would kill to be able to attend one '80-'83 matinee. There was just something about the creativity and energy that really inspires me and it is hard to duplicate that. I also know that that period is long since over. Hardcore is definitely great now, but it's just wrong for me not to take my musical cues from those amazing bands. It's definitely a catalyst of artistic expression for me, said the vocalist. "Musically, we get held up to Minor Threat or whatever, and that is more than an honor, but when I listen to our stuff I can't really say that it sounds like any one particular band. Of course hardcore in itself is fairly limited so I am probably wrong. Some old-time record collector could probably tell me exactly who we are 'ripping off' but I feel that we are fairly unique," added Darby. Referring to my question about being a rip-off band or the real deal, Darby asked me: "What is the 'real deal'? Is it something (music) that is birthed out of a creative situation and inspiration? If so, yeah, I guess we are the *real deal*. If it's stuff like complete originality and insane talent - then I guess that we are not so 'real deal' (laughs)."

When I initially contacted Darby about writing a story about Hit the Deck I was surprised that he remembered me from a while back when I did a zine called *The Crucial Times*. Darby wrote: "You seem like you are into legitimate hardcore." "What is 'legitimate hardcore,'" I asked him. "That's a broad definition. There is a plethora of amazingly talented bands, but the energy is limited," said Darby. "Okay, then, what is illegitimate hardcore?," I asked. "When a band is together for completely non-hardcore reasons - fashion, popularity, getting girls, money, etc. I'm just a kid so I am not justifying what is hardcore and what is not, but if those things are 'hardcore' I certainly wasn't drawn to those aspects when I first got into it," Darby said.

Listening to the bands recordings as I began to write this article I was impressed that there were absolutely no metal overtones

to be found. "If we were talented enough, I'd like to start a metal band to raise money for charity or something, maybe buy my folks a nice house. Other than that, I am wary of anything that is metal-tinged. There are plenty of great metal-influenced bands, but I don't get the same catharsis from that as I do when I listen to straight up hardcore. There's just something about it...there's something to be said for the short, fast, loud, and sometimes seemingly talentless because of the heart behind it all - the message that it brings to you just slaps you right in the face. I love it," explained Darby.

I asked the vocalist what he thought was most lacking in today's hardcore scene. "I think that the most cliché thing to say would be 'unity' so I will say that. Kids today have trouble busting out of bias and tradition so there are still a lot of barriers. I still don't feel comfortable bringing my ideas to the table in hardcore even though that's what I fell in love with...this gathering and having an open season on everything. Every given used to be questioned..." said Darby.

Whether it would make the singer feel uncomfortable or not, I had to find out exactly what he could feel uncomfortable about "bringing to the table" in the hardcore scene. After all, hardcore is supposedly about open-mindedness and the free exchange of ideas and thoughts. I do feel the need to qualify that statement a bit - I have never really believed the whole "open-mindedness" bit because from my observations over the past 18 years I have come to the conclusion that the "open-mindedness" is mainly relegated to a strict set of "do's and don'ts" and newcomers be warned - adhere or be cast out! "Religion, for instance. It's such a taboo subject but personal belief is so tightly woven into hardcore that I think it's valid that I am 'religious' and 'hardcore' at the same time. I get the impression that religion doesn't belong here or possibly worse, that kids just don't care. Back in the day - look at bands like the Bad Brains. They bought something that challenged the general mode of thought in punk even if they did get whacky towards the end. It's exciting to see what other people believe in, what they hold dear to their hearts because that's what makes hardcore something really valuable and honest. I am just wary that we are establishing rules and borders concerning an open forum and that's what I want to go against in a sense," explained the vocalist.

Mixing hardcore and religion is a good way to get ignored in the hardcore scene. "I think that as a hardcore band, we have some real value even if people think that we are wrong. At the very least we are testing the waters and questioning 'why are we wrong?,' said

Darby. I couldn't help but agree.

"Conformist" is an overused word in the underground music scene but it's a word that is usually used to describe those outside of the underground scene, but you know what they say, "One finger pointing at you, four more pointing back at me..."

The band's vocalist explained further: "I think that it's understandable that hardcore kids are wary of religion in many ways. The Church has a ton of blood on it's hands and that is hard to reconcile. So, as an institution, it's failing to gain credibility in the underground. The ideas of organized religion have much potential and much truth. There's a lot of fruit in what the Bible has to say, what the blood of the martyrs represents." If so, why the almost-utter rejection of it all then? I asked. "I think that people just shut out anything (if it's) uncomfortable to discuss and if it causes a direct lifestyle change and goes against societal norms. Those excuses are wearing thin. The scene willingly ushers in worldly things like drugs, drinking, the party scene in general and still calls for change within. Does that make sense? Somethings got to give if real progression is to be made. That's what I believe that the heart of hardcore is aiming for. Look at straightedge," said the vocalist. "The status of religion has been severely damaged in this country by stupid, old white guys. That's the reason that we're a band - to stand up to that and say 'we're not like that!' We're saying that there is a truth - it's changed our lives. We want there to be no mistake, we are a Christian band, but we don't operate much in the Christian scene, our band ethics are more in line with a secular band on that level, but definitely, let the record show that we are Christians," concluded Darby.

I really can't help but root for a band that is willing to stand up and face the winds of opposition and doing so with such a simplistic musical finesse really makes me love them even more. When it comes to hardcore, this journalist has become very cynical and weary over the last decade. I mean, show me the original spirit of hardcore! Show me some true grit, not a 24 track over-produced piece of plastic that masquerades as "hardcore!" We need to spend less time chasing after big name producers and worrying about slick CD graphics and more time writing honest and quality songs that will stand the test of time and incite a new generation of hardcore kids to pick up the torch. Hit the Deck may not incite a new generation of kids, but their debut on Strikefirst Records has certainly reminded me of everything that I love about this crazy form of music called "Hardcore." ☛

JESSE LUSCIOUS

WHITEY ON THE MOON

What a day- Green Party Presidential candidate David Cobb stayed at our home last night, and I spoke at a brunch in his honor and later hosted a small house party at our home. The (delicious) leftovers are gently expanding in my gut, while Gil-Scott Heron raps about the revolution's broadcast options. This Presidential candidate did not come with a Secret Service detail, although there was a gaggle of college students who dropped him off last night around midnight. Not quite the same, although The Apocalypse Dog guarded his life with all the dedication that being a Turbohund East Bay en-"tails." Ba-dump-bump!

Save The Children

Cobb is running a "safe states" strategy this election. This means he and his female Vice Presidential candidate Pat LaMarche are emphasizing states which are seen to be solidly Republican or Democrat in the upcoming Presidential election. Currently, California is seen as a solidly Democratic state, which means a hundred thousand votes for Cobb will have no effect on the outcome in our current flawed "winner-take-all" system. (A proportional representational system would be best, closely followed by the junking of the Electoral College and the switch to the popular vote... Instant Run-Off Voting would make all of these changes even more small-"d" democratic) A vote for Cobb and local Green Party candidates means a vote for an exciting, organized, savvy third party. Cobb tells listeners that he is not saying people shouldn't vote for him, just that they should seriously weigh their vote before making their choice.

It's a subtle way of acknowledging the tricky spot many pragmatic progressives are in- Kerry's a choad (pro-3 Strikes, drug war, Iraq War, NAFTA, AND Patriot Act) and Dubya is a walking disaster zone. St. Ralph is still saying all of the right things, yet he is a lightning rod for Gore apologists (short version, the 2000 election was Al's to lose- with the help of Katherine Harris and 5 Supreme Court Justices- and he lost it. Blaming 90,000 Nader voters in Florida when at least 94,000 mostly Democratic voters were wrongfully barred from voting at all in Florida seems odd [according to Greg Palast "The Best Democracy Money Can Buy"], and that's only one of many odd things about Florida 2000). Yet the Green Party is running more and more local and state-wide candidates who are winning, election by election. The Green's grassroots momentum is growing, and the long-term health of the Green Party looks very promising. Being blamed, accurately or not, for another 4 years of Bush would set the Greens back a decade in terms of public opinion. For progressives in safe states, Cobb is a logical choice- as are (in Cobb's words) the Peace and Freedom Party's Leonard Peltier and the independent Ralph Nader.

The Revolution Will Not Be Televised

So what's a good little Green to do? Weigh your vote. What state are you in? What's the projected outcome? And most importantly, how are you choosing to cast your vote- Strategically? Morally? Both? The bottom line is this- no one is owed your vote. The idea that any party has an automatic claim on your choice (for instance, because the other candidate is incredibly odious) is profoundly anti-democratic.

Home Is Where The Hatred Is

As I mentioned, being in the solidly Kerry state of California (at least as of mid-August), means we have some strategic flexibility if we find ourselves in this dilemma. However, this afternoon Jello Biafra raised the following

scenario which we should consider as the election approaches. What will happen if Secretary of State Kevin Shelley is forced to resign due to the current fund-raising scandal that's enveloping him? Shelley, a San Francisco Democrat, has taken the lead in dealing with the problematic touch-screen voting machines which have had a spotty record the last election. As a former poll worker, I know from direct experience that these machines are incredible in terms of accessibility for the disabled and ease-of-use. They do need a voter-verified paper trail and open source code though, 2 things which Shelley decertified all of the California machines for not having. If Shelley leaves office, the Governor -macho Republican from hell- can appoint a successor for the rest of Shelley's term. Will such an appointment uphold Shelley's decertification of the problematic voting machines? Hmm, if Dubya needed his bro Jeb's help last time, perhaps it's Ah-nold's turn to help the Girly-Man in the White House?! Time will tell, Shelley's scandal may be just a distant memory by the time this comes out, or it may be front page fodder in nation-wide.

When You Are Who You Are

Speaking of my long day today, I am campaigning for Berkeley City Council (District 5). We're keeping things lively, with a series of fundraising shows/art events/film screenings, as well as more traditional house parties and public appearances at neighborhood associations. There's more information at www.townleyforcouncil.org. Come out to some of the rad events we're planning! And on a more serious note, the election's this November 2nd, and donations are needed constantly. The incumbent's preferred successor already has a nice war chest, so we need all the help you and your friends and family can give. We're running a grassroots, honest, and serious campaign. We'll need volunteers in September and October, so sign up today!

A Sign Of The Ages

Alright, here's this month's batch of aural awesomeness. Dwarves "Must Die" (Sympathy), Voetsek "The Castrator Album" (Six Weeks), Lars Frederiksen and the Bastards "Viking" (Hellcat), Blasters "Live: Going Home" (Shout), Slapshot "Digital Warfare" (Bridge Nine), Year Future "s/t" (GSL), Soviettes "LP11" (Adeline), Alkaline Trio/One Man Army (BYO), Rancid "Sick Sick World" (Rancid), eX-Girl "Endangered Species" (Alternative Tentacles), Slim Cessna's Auto Club "Bloody Tenet" (Alternative Tentacles), Authority Zero "Andiamo," Zolar X "Timeless" (Alternative Tentacles), Die Hunns "Long Legs" (Disaster), The Cinch "Shake If You Got It" (Dirtnap), Intro5pect "s/t" (A-F), Farewell To Youth "s/t" (Lorelei), The Minds "Plastic Girls" (Dirtnap), V/A "CAMBODIAN CASSETTE ARCHIVES VOL. 1" (Sublime Frequencies).

One record which would've been on here and isn't is by a long-time favorite band of mine which may or may not be embroiled in a dispute with its newly ex-label, run by one of my oldest friends in the music scene. Names if and when things become clearer to me.

Turbohund East Bay, ruff!

Product placement- The Frisk are proud to have donated an unreleased tune to the "Rock Against Bush Vol. 1" compilation on Fat Wreck. Our full-length cd "Audio Ransom Note" is out on Adeline Records, while the picture disc lp version may be out now on Erika Records. Go to www.the-frisk.com and www.adelinerecords.net for details.

Oh crap, It's been 270 words since I mentioned www.townleyforcouncil.org!

Stay strong, stay true, and always read between the lines! ♣

The Name's Bondie...

Von Bondies

An Interview with Drummer Don Blum



By Jeffrey Schechter / Photos By Melanie Nissin

“When you are surrounded by bikini clad women and you're the only sitting there in jeans, boots and a black t-shirt you feel slightly out of place.” So says Don Blum of the Von Bondies about the recent performance at a surf competition on Hunting Beach. The Von Bondies are the last ones who should be feeling out of place as of late. With their new release off Sire/Reprise Records, “Pawn Shop Heart” these four rockers hailing from Detroit are receiving acclaim and approval from the far reaches of the rocking world. Set to play the Redding and Leeds festival in England drummer Don Blum had this to say:

“England has always been good to us, the fans, the people... it is a very comfortable place for us to play, it's like a home away from home. With the unique and raw sound that has become the Von Bondies signature vibe “Pawn Shop Heart” erupts onto the charts with the sort of sultry vigor that singer Jason Stollsteimer puts out song after song. It is purity embodied in rock and roll, the way the stripped down simplicity conveys such emotion is a testament to the truth in the spirit of timeless rock.

I had the privilege to talk with drummer Don Blum, from the rainy haven of Michigan to sunny LA where the band was on a brief stint before going out on tour in support of “Pawn Shop Heart.”

When you guys started as a band, the Von Bondies were after this sound that has been referred to as unique, and raw, even sultry. Does the band all draw from the same musical influences? And is that conveyed into the music?

Don Blum: No the music stands pretty much on its own. Jason is the principal songwriter, and he brings in a melody, or a rhythm and we all sort of collaborate until it becomes the song. Sometimes he has the entire thing worked out in his head



and we simply polish it a bit. The music isn't directly influenced by anything except the emotion he is, or we are trying to convey as a band.

Influences?

Don Blum: As for me I am a huge fan of seriously wailing on the drum kit. I like the hard hitting of Jon Bonham, and Keith Moon. I am a firm believer in putting all of myself into my stage performance. With Pawn Shop Heart we stripped the drums down to the bare essentials. I have a bass drum, floor tom and cymbals, by having so few things to work with, I put all my emotions into my performance to get the songs across.

Sounds like a real genuine approach.

Don Blum: yeah but recently I have been hurting myself. I think I am getting carpal tunnel syndrome.

It's a dirty job....

Don Blum: yeah...

Let me ask you about your writing and recording process some more. Is it a painful process?

Don Blum: We have been really fortunate, where things could get tedious for some, it tends to

fall into place for us. Like I said, Jason will come in with a chorus idea, or a few verses and we will cut through them together. It usually comes pretty naturally. Our creative process is rather cathartic, the emptying of emotion into what we have, and then sometimes we screw around with it at sound check. We don't really write anything that we four can't play, or recreate in our performance.

Looking back over a few years, from the first record to this new one. How has the transition affected you? Was there label pressure? Personal expectations?

Don Blum: This is a hard question for me to answer. The thing is, personally, it seemed like a really gradual progression. We started with minimal aspirations. Genuine, but minimal, lets record some 45s...lets do some touring. It was just 4 friends, creating music and rocking out. It was a truly punk rock kind of vision. Then we were touring a lot, and the press was hyping us a lot...it just seemed like a natural progression. We released on Sympathy Records, and from Sympathy to now on Sire things just kind of happened. It seemed like

the most positive and logical thing to do to get the music out there.... uh.... I'm sorry I forgot the question. (Laughter)

Label pressure, expectations?

Don Blum: Right. Right. No the label was lax; they let us do our thing. We got into the studio with Jerry Harrison, and it was a free atmosphere. HE was like a coach, listening and advising. But, the songs were pretty much laid out and structured how we wanted, and he was familiar with what we wanted, and our sound. He was amazing though, some of the suggestions he made came through on the record, and we are that much better for it.

With the success and acclaim of Pawn Shop Heart, the Von Bondies are now on the national light. The single "C'mon C'mon" on constant rotation. It must be a hell of a feeling.

Don Blum: It is. It is really a nice feeling, we are all very proud of what we have done. It comes as a pleasant surprise sometimes, especially since we never really thought it would come to this level. It's cool.

Since you guys come from

Detroit, being in the Mid West and not West Coast shine or East Coast demure. How do you view Detroit; haven for solid musical acts, or a place to get started then get out.

Don Blum: Well, when we were coming up it was really great. Since it isn't too crowded in the music scene it gives bands a good opportunity to get out there and get heard. It was a good atmosphere, the vibe being not all that much of a competition it really gave us a chance to develop the style we were after. In Detroit it is a natural thing for a good act, musicians, artists...whatever to get attention, and make an impact.

With this neo-garage, bluesy rock and roll movement getting such huge focus in music, are the Von Bondies pleased to be a part of it?

Don Blum: Yes and no. We want to be recognized as our own band, of course. There are some great bands out there in these... genres, if you want to call them something. It is cool to be sited as influential and what not, and to be a part of music today is refreshing thing. The vision and future of Rock music really renews my faith in the rock and roll spirit. Things come in cycles; I think that the sincerity of a lot of music today is a sign of that.

The simplicity in the Von Bondies music is a great forum to really express raw emotion. Any plans to dash it up, fancy art type bullshit?

Don Blum: We try to just let it be what it is destined to be. The music is a natural expression of how we are feeling when it is written. When we first recorded, we were just getting started so it was excessively simple. As we went along, we all became more comfortable with each other's style, and performance we moved it along to the expression of moods and feelings. Jason has done the bulk of the writing, but he always pushes for all of us to write as well. On this next record we should all be imputing equal creativity. We will always just let the music do what it does, and when we get on stage we get it all out. That's what we have been doing, and it gets a great response from the fans.

With Pawn Shop Heart sweeping the charts as well as airwaves, the Von Bondies are poised for a huge national tour to kick off in the fall. ☛

Reviewers: (MC) Mitchy-Poo Cardwell, (RK) Ramsey Kanaan, (STM) Sammy The Mick, (JC) Jimi Cheeta, (Scoot) Scooter, (LD) Laura Davis, (FM) Falin Minoru, (JJ) John Joh, (AW) Alan Wright, (BAM) Brett Mathews.

12 STEP REBELS

"Go Go Graveyard Rockin'" CD

Modern psychobilly band that sounds a lot like TIGER ARMY, which makes sense because Geoff Kresge from T. A. produced the record, co-owns the label and the 2 bands will be touring together soon. Not to say that they are a carbon copy, just right along the same path, with pulsating stand-up bass, horror themes and smooth vocals. (JC)

(Dead Body / 3727 W. Magnolia Blvd #231 / Burbank, CA 91510)

12 SUMMERS OLD

"When The Romance Ends" CD

10 tracks, showcasing some of the better indie-pop / college-emo stuff out there. There's a thousand bands sounding like this these days, but these guys are probably in the top 10%, which is pretty generous, I think. The soundtrack for the emo-angst of the changing seasons, I'm sure. (RK)

(Anomer Records / www.anomerrecords.com)

46 SHORT

"Just A Liability" CD

New CD of speedy SoCal melodic hardcore. Mix up DI with PENNYWISE, and you have a workmanlike, but hardly inspired effort. It all starts to sound the same too quickly. Much akin to TOTAL CHAOS. (RK)

(GoKart Records / www.gokartrecords.com)

ACTION ACTION

"Don't Cut Your Fabric To This Year's Fashion" CD

Debut LP from a band that really brings back the sounds of the 80s.

From poppy synths, to the darker edges of ECHO AND

THE BUNNY-MEN, they do it all rather well. Looking back never sounded so tomorrow. (RK)

(Victory / www.victoryrecords.com)



ALL ELSE FAILED

"This Never Happened" CD

This band has always been criminally under appreciated. AEF combines the tech glory of CONVERGE, the crunch of BOTCH, the heaviness of HATEBREED, and the spirit of BLACK FLAG and crushed all in it's path. I'm serious; you need to check this band out if you like metallic hardcore that doesn't play any fucking games. (STM)

(www.abacusrecordings.com)

ANADIVINE

"Zoo" CD

Full-length debut from pop-punk group out of New York. After a long listen, it seems this band has something special that will probably propel them into the spotlight. Sure to be a hit with the younger crowd. Their poppy harmonies and creative changes make this a

really good debut. (LD)

(www.themilitiagroup.com)

ANAL BEARD

"Din Noir" cd

An irreverent mix of CAPTAIN SENSABLE, HALF JAPANESE and TOY DOLLS (I guess that there couldn't really be a reverent mix of that lot). Very English, very merry and very silly. (JC)

(Boss Tunage / P.O. Box 2927 / Brighton, Sussex / BN1 3SX / UK)

ANFALL

"The Crusher" 7" ep

Title track is a RAMONES cover, also includes 2 originals. Solid German melodic punk. Their originals are mid tempo and are in a SHA 69 meats SEX PISTOLS style. (JC)

(G-Force / T. Drescher / Worierhof / 30900 Wedermark / Germany)

ANGER REGIMENT

"Aces And Eights" CD

Let me tell you about FLOORPUNCH. They played The Cocobdie here in SF years ago and some Nazis showed up because they thought some other band was playing. We don't tolerate Nazis in Norcal and immediately started beating the shit out of the fucks.

Now, most bands ask people to stop fighting because, let's face it, they don't want attention pulled away from them. Not FLOORPUNCH. They joined us in our battle with the Nazis. And it wasn't just 'cause it was a just a fight or whatever, it was because they were true hardcore kids, and they saw other hardcore kids defending their scene, and they helped as hardcore kids are supposed to do. So, what does any of this have to do with this band? Well, ANGER REGIMENT is made up of members of FLOORPUNCH and they play the pure, no-holds-barred, mosh 'til you die, and stay young-til-you-die kind of hardcore goodness that you'd expect from a group of dudes who know well the true meaning of hardcore. Get this CD and hear great hardcore. Fans of BURN, UNDERDOG, and other NYHC oldies but goodies will eat

this shit up. (STM)

(www.bridge9.com)

THE ANSWER

"You Had Your Chance" CD

This is one awesome album. Straightforward goodness with all sorts of moshiness to drive you Dunk and Hoodie kids absolutely nuts. There are a lot of bands these days that play that retro straightforward hardcore fast-fast-breakdown-fastfast-twostep thing, but THE ANSWER rises high above all of them as absolutely masters of this shit. It's a great band, and if you think you're core, you should get this. Recommended for fans of TERROR, THE PROMISE, BANE, and, hell, YOUTH OF TODAY. (STM)

(www.excursionrecords.com)

ANTISEEN

"The 20 Year Anniversary Show" DVD

This DVD contains 34 live tracks of "destructo rock". With songs like "Self Induced Lobotomy," "Animals, Eat

'Em," "Wife Beater," "White Trash Bitch," "Fuck All Y'All," and a cover of "Beat On the Brat" (Ramones). (FM)

(www.tkorecords.com)

ARKHAM

"The Freak Power Candidate" CD

I've never understood the appeal of GREEN RIVER, and grunge. These guys do, apparently, and are bringing it back, lo-fi style. Mebbe you have to take the right psychedelics to truly dig....? (RK)

(Volcom Entertainment)

ARMY OF FRESHMEN

"Beg, Borrow, Steal" CD

Keyboard quirky pop with a big band / stadium sound. Imagine

ANDREW WK if he had two keyboards and a moog, instead of three guitarists. Or

NERFHERDER

playing their hits on casios...Big

sound, big pro-

duction, catchy enough. Worth checking out. (RK)

(33rd Street Records / www.armyoffreshmen.com)



ASHTRAY

"Robo Polo" 7" EP

Really cool record by a band that I have never heard of, but am totally gonna try and find more from. Dual male and female vocals with a guy who sounds like a pirate and a girl who sounds like a cross between PollyStyrine from X-RAY SPEX and DeDe Troit from UXA. Completely over the top performance and some hilarious songs to boot. A+. (JC)

(P.O. Box 4216 / Santa Rosa, CA 95402)

AVOID ONE THING

"Chopstick Bridge" CD

Whoa is the plight of the youngster today. Anyone feeling a little left of normal must be compelled to pick up a Les Paul & start an emo band. I'm not gonna say that the "one thing" to avoid is this record, but you could do better. (LD)

(www.sideonedummy.com)

BAD ACID TRIP

"Energetic Bursts of Psychopathic Fury" CD

Am I to assume that the orgasmic woman at the beginning of this disc is reacting to the music? If so, she must be deaf! This is just wrong. And I think this band might need some-mental help. Picture a wannabe speed metal band fronted by Beavis. Yeah - that bad. (LD)

(www.sony.com)

TONY BENN

"Tony Benn's Greatest Hits" CD

TONY BENN is a venerable leftish British politician. Somewhat akin to Barbara Lee (if she sticks around for another 30 years) or Paul Wellstone. Here you get lengthy bits from some of his best speeches from the 90s, set to some ambient, urban grooves, courtesy of

SOUNDSCAPE

CHARLES BAILEY. It actually works real well. Not least cos BENN is / was a great speaker. (RK)
(www.cbm-international.co.uk)

BENSIN

"Leave Your Mark" CD

Breezy, run of the mill pop punk - a la BLINK 182, ATARI's - enlivened only with the addition of some 80s keyboards which gives it a nice touch. Unfortunately, not enough to make em stand out. (RK)
(Search And Rescue Records / www.searchandrescuerecords.com)

BETTER LUCK NEXT YEAR

"It's The Numbers That Kill Us" CD

Why is this record so excruciating? It's just your typical run of the mill emo record. And yet, it's normality just makes it suck that much more. Key ingredients: moody photos of clouds on the cover, emotional lyrics, stupid name. I can't take it. (LD)
(www.topnotchrec.com)

BIG IN JAPAN

"Who Really Needs A Heart Anyway?" CD

2nd album of powerpop. Well played and constructed. It seems, however, to lack that vital something which made bands like the VAPORS, or the NERVES so wonderful. Certainly, this is leagues above the nonsense MR T EXPERIENCE are producing these days. (RK)
(Insubordination Records / www.insubordinationrecords.com)

BILHARZIA

self-titled CDEP

Rough and tumble self-released demo / ep. A band that seems to know it's way around a power chord and a beer keg. Seems like they are off to a solid start. (JC)
(No Address)

BLEEDING THROUGH

"This Is Live" DVD

He may get mad, but I'm saying it: Brandon, the gorgeous god of metal in the skintight black top and mascara, used to rock baggy basketball jerseys, headbands, and claim Monst...well, let's just leave it at that. The point is this: fuck all the image that is so heavily incorporated with this band because the music alone is fucking amazing enough. Of course, this is a dvd, so image plays a pretty important part, right? Not really, no. While there are plenty of stunning visuals (god, he really is gorgeous!), the most significant aspect here is the sheer power of the performance. Seriously, this Orange County outfit absolutely overwhelms and destroys all in its path with their flawless cacophony of Swedish metal crossed with OC hardcore. Of course, as metaltastic as they are there is something wonderfully punk rock about this band. I don't mean their mohawks or their sound, but their outlook and attitude. Yes, this band is pretty perfect. I'm totally rambling in this review (how can I focus when he really is so gorgeous!), but what needs to be understood is that BT is one of the most



amazing modern day metalcore bands and this dvd shows them in all their sweaty flailing unrelenting glory. Get it, dork. Actually, just get it for the commentary. That shit is golden. Whoa! Brandon just said on the commentary that "fuck you, forever" is the worst lyrics he ever wrote and that sucks cuz I say "fuck you, forever" on one of my band's songs, but I say it like four times in a row. Shit. Never mind. Don't buy this shit. (STM)
(www.kungfurecords.com)

BLINDSIGHTED

"Injection" CD

Debut from some Las Vegas chaps, coupled with the drummer from STRUNG OUT. They mix melodic hardcore with a metallic edge (very similar to STRUNG OUT, unsurprisingly). No solos as such, but lots of high end trebly guitars, and the signature, smooth production from Ryan Greene. If you dig STRUNG OUT's recent sonic assaults, you'll definitely want this. (RK)
(www.blindsighted.com)

BLOOD / DIZZY DIZZY MKII

"Aural History Of The Toilet Tour" CD

1999. Aging metallic Oysters the BLOOD hits the States for the first (and only) time. They took DC's DDMKII with em. Here's 12 live tracks each, and a new studio one. Sound quality is so so. Two good bands, but definitely for the fans only. (RK)
(contact: suspectsds@aol.com)

BLUE ROSE LIAR

"Sycamore" CD

What we have here is a self-release that sounds like a major label offering. The volume's set to 10 as the heavy metal / hardcore comes bounding out your speakers. Very tough, yet with an intelligence to it that sets them apart. (LD)
(www.blueroseliar.com)

BOXER REBELLION

"Autumn Leaves" CD

Debut full length from a bunch of white rasta's playing driving melodic hardcore. They'd really like to be the BAD BRAINS, but end up doing a fair rendition of LIFE-TIME / STRIKE ANYWHERE. Their reggae leaves a little to be desired, but then again, the BAD BRAINS couldn't play reggae either. This could've been a Dischord release in the late 80s. (RK)
(Creep Records / www.creeprecords.com)

BRASSKNUCKLE BOYS

"American Bastard" LP

I wasn't looking forward to listening to what appeared to be "tough guy" stomp punk. Luckily, this release elevates above the "let's get in a fight" mentality. Whiskey scraped vocals and a working class punk sound akin to BONECRUSHER and DROPKICK MURPHYS with lyrics sometimes reflective in that MIKE NESS (Social Distortion) style. They do a cover of a KRIS KRISTOFERSON song and a surprising version of "Boulevard of Broken Dreams" by HANOI ROCKS. Limited to 1000 with 300 on "gunsmoke". Get it. (FM)
(Haunted Town Records / 1658 N. Milwaukee Ave. #169 / Chicago, IL 60647)

THE BREAK

"Handbook For The Hopeless" CD

Hmm. It's hard to classify this. It sounds like they want to be punk, but there's this grunge undertone that's holding them back. The songs are catchy and full of poignant lyrics. I could see this record propelling these Jersey boys into the big time which, I think, is exactly where they want to be. (LD)
(www.ferretstlye.com)

BREATHIER RESIST

"Charmer" CD

Holy shit! What label is this on?! Brutality is not something I associate with Jade Tree. And yet, the new BR has as much balls-out hardcore as anything I've heard this month. If you're a fan of CAVE-IN & CONVERGE, this is for you. Kicked my ass. (LD)
(www.jadetree.com)



BUMBLEBEEZ 81

"The Printz" CD

A friend of mine described this as jokey & dumb. Sounds right to me as I begin to stumble through this record of wannabe BECK. All the bells & whistles and uber-hipster quirky elements still do not disguise the sheer lameness of the music here. A real stinker. (LD)
(www.geffen.com)

CALL ME LIGHTNING

"The Trouble We're In" CD

One of the most unique records of the month. These angular, disjointed songs manufactured by three mid-western boys have got me hanging on every note. It just seems so much more honest and heartfelt than most of these lazy bands today. Their inspiration stems from the singer Nathan Lilley's nearly out of control vocals. It's as if he is running to catch up with himself, & it just creates this great intensity. Highly recommended! (LD)
(www.revelationrecords.com)

CAST ASIDE

"The Struggle" CD

Holy shit! I had heard the name but hadn't heard the jams, and when I finally got this thing on the stereo, I was blown away. Awesome metallic hardcore along the line of HATEBREED and 25TALIFE, where the metal is present but not overwhelming. If you dig the heavy but fast sound so often associated with Philly and Clevo, this band is definitely worth your time. Good shit! (STM)
(www.deathwishinc.com)

CHAMPION

"Promise Kept" CD

The pride and glory of the Northwest return with a full length of posi anthems for the posi youth. As far as straight edge hardcore goes, CHAMPION is one of the greats. They deliver all the singalongs and floorpunch breakdowns you need until posi numbers comes around again. If you are currently wearing a GORILLA

BISCUITS longslieve that you got of ebay, a crewcut, some cut-off cammos, and personalize dunks that your mom got you for your birthday while you bedroom mosh to **SIDE BY SIDE**, this is the album for you. (STM) (www.bridge9.com)

CHINESE STARS

"A Rare Sensation" CD

This is the best hipster record out there. CS combines !!! dance beats with post-hardcore searing lyrics. They've got a slick sexy sound, which is sure to stir those dancin' feet. Part of the neu-wave movement from labels like DFA. Check it out. (LD) (Three One G / PO Box 178262 / San Diego, CA 92177)

COLOR

"Out & About" CD

An album that is made & played by boys who obviously grew up on the CURE. Robert Smith's vocal styles are very apparent, as are some of the CURE'S melodies. Beyond that, this EP packs in plush pop complete with tambourine. (LD) (www.monarchymusiccorp.com)

COMMUNIQUE

"Poison Arrows" CD

COMMUNIQUE evolved from AMERICAN STEEL, a band that I was very fond of. COMMUNIQUE are light years away from that though, leaving only the vaguest hint of their past glory. Not saying that I don't like this, because I do—very much. Smoother and more melodic, taking more than a page from the song-books of the SMITHS and CURE (among others), yet also adding quite a bit that is all their own. The provocative lyrics and songs stand up well to multiple listens. (JC) (Lookout / 3264 Adeline Street / Berkeley, CA 94703)



CONVERGE

"You Fail Me" CD

Fuck yes! The almighty CONVERGE is back. And they are on Epitaph, so hopefully so mallrats will buy this thinking that it sounds like The Offspring and catch a super bad trip. Ha! OK, look, let's get down to brass tax. CONVERGE is one of the most amazing metalcore bands out there, always innovative and terrifying. On this new track, they have most definitely outdone themselves. YFM combines that blazing shrill buzzsaw insanity of "Jane Doe" with the more hardcore-orientated bottom-heavy thunderous heaviness of the old records, namely "Petitioning". Basically, what you have here is CONVERGE combining every sound their twisted little minds have devised over the past how-ever-many- years to create the penultimate CONVERGE sonic assault. It's like a highlight reel of their career. Kids, listen to me, if you want to hear the single most extreme band in the underground, shed of all pomp and posture that usually accompanies all things extreme, check out CONVERGE. You are either in for a supreme spiritual awakening or the most horrifying nightmare you've ever experienced, and in either case, it will be

amazing. Trust me. Buy this record. Your parents will worry about you all the more. P.S. Epitaph: Send me the real thing, goddamnit, with artwork and everything, or I will trash everything you release from this day forward. Just kidding.... Sort of...Thanks. (STM) (www.epitaphrecords.com)

CRAMPS

"Nazibilly Werwoelfen" CDEP

This is the long overdue (semi) official CD release of this nefarious live bootleg. Originally this was a very limited 10". The weirdo who initially put it out re-titled all of the tracks with odd Nazi references, which had nothing to do with the band or the concert that this is taken from, so don't get any wrong ideas. The material is from a raw and fiery performance the band did in 1979 and features 8 brilliant tracks, long regarded as probably the finest of CRAMPS bootlegs. As a big fan of this band, I am thrilled to have a copy of this and thrilled in general with this tiding me over until next week when the band releases a 2 CD set of rarities etc., that I am sure that you can look forward to a review of in the next issue. (JC) (Road To Ruin Distribution)

CRIME

"San Francisco's STILL Doomed" CD

Where to begin? Crime is, in my opinion, the all-time greatest punk band from San Francisco. They released the very first West Coast punk record in 1976 with their "Hot Wire My Heart" 45, which is one of my all-time favorite records: They are also the coolest looking band of all time. Notice a pattern developing? I've said "all-time" three, uh, times already. This shit is *that* good. "San Francisco's STILL Doomed" is a very welcome reissue and one of the best in recent years. This should serve as the perfect introduction to this classic band. Soak in the attitude and hate—let the guitar club you over the head—it really doesn't get much betterÉ (MC) (www.swamirecords.com)

RAY DAYTONA and GOOGOOBOMBOS

"Fasten Seat Belt" CD

This is chock full of all kinds of stuff that I love. Shredding garage rock, souring surf instrumentals, snotty punk rock, all peppered with great old horror and sci-fi movie samples. Lots of fun and a great party CD, well worth grabbing. Cover art by Winston Smith. (JC) (Amonia / www.raydaytona.com)

D-CUP

"Shark Attack" 7"

This beach punk trio stirs the edgier sounds of AGENT ORANGE with the melodic harmonies of the CROWD. Well recorded and executed, they'd be right at home on the first, classic RODNEY ON THE ROQ compilation. This limited, hand numbered 45 also comes in a "first day" issue, signed and limited to a mere 100. Paddle out! (FM) (www.hostagerecords.com)

DEAD IN HOLLYWOOD

self-titled CD

All you KID DYNAMITE freaks are gonna shit yourselves over this right here. As far as melodic rockin' poppish

hardcore goes, this band right here stands head and shoulders above anyone else in the game right now. If you are a fan of KID DYNAMITE, LIFETIME, or JAWBREAKER, you'd be a fool not to look into this band. (STM) (www.excursionrecords.com)

DEADLINE / BRASSKNUCKLE BOYS

"Can't Be Beaten" split LP

Deadline hail from the UK and not surprisingly have a great VICE SQUAD sound of both the Lia and Beki periods. Melodic choruses and charging guitars abound. Brassknuckle Boys walk the Ol side of town where BONECRUSHER live. They do a nice copy of "American Girl" by TOM PETTY. This is the second Haunted Town Records release that has kicked my ass this month. Nice. (FM) (www.hauntedtownrecords.com)

DEATH THREAT

"Now Here Fast" CD

Man, I love this band. Although they never thanked my girl for some weed she got them, they have always impressed me. It's tough guy hardcore that lives and rages somewhere between the old school thrashy goodness of AGNOSTIC FRONT and the metallic heaviosity of HATEBREED, but with a very obvious punk rock influence. This is just a great hardcore band. Almost any hardcore kid can appreciate this album, regardless of your genre / style affiliation. This is just pure, great hardcore. TRIPLE CROWN: Be a pal and send me the real thing, booklet and all. (STM) (www.triplecrownrecords.com)

DEEP ENOUGH TO DIE

"My City Of Ruin" CD

Above average 'post-hardcore'. I guess. I liked punk and hardcore before it went past the post personally. But if early MOVIELIFE gets you excited, you'll probably be wanting to strap on the white belts to these young gents too. (RK) (Dressed To Kill Records / www.dressedtokill.org)

DEREK LYN PLASTIC

"Invisible Skin" 7" EP

A release like this is what keeps reviewing records fun. Not only is it a cool record, it came with stickers and a cool t-shirt. Nothing like buttering up us reviewers a little. As far as the music goes, it's nice, down and dirty punk rock, sometimes a little more hardcore, other times, more trashy R+R. 6 tracks in all, all good. This is self-released, so he / they are up for grabs—hopefully somebody good will pick them up. (JC) (691 John Wesley Dobbs Ave. / Unit M / Atlanta, GA 30312)

DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN

"Miss Machine" CD

Never before has the term "worth the wait" been so wildly appropriate as now, sitting here with the new Dillinger in my hands. It's been a long time, with only an EP with a guest vocalist (some dude who happens to be one of the greatest frontmen of all time) to tide us over, but now the Dilly faithful have been blessed with a new full length. If you are expecting Calculating 2: The Revenge, you will be sorely disappointed. With The Plan still bring the chaotic tech metal that has made them legends, this album also has them experimenting with melody and atmosphere and (sweet

SOUNDSCAPE

Jesus) this new singer dude actually sings! Actual singing! On a Dilly record! Well, yes, but the kid pulls it off masterfully. And if you loved the EP with Mike Patton, you will love Greg's vocals because the guy sounds like...uhhh...well, Mike Patton 2: The Revenge. Yes, yes, this thing is awesome fantastic. It will please the diehard Plan fans and should also open the ears, hearts, and minds of the ignorant masses that have yet to experience this colossal musical sensation. Kids, seriously, all those metalcore bands you love, they are all just faking the funk and trying to do what the Dilly Plan did nine billion years ago. Why do I even need to review this thing? Everyone in the world should already know that DEP rules the school and if you go to a different school, well, your school for slow kids and it sucks. Oh and Dilly guys, you should have kept some of the original titles (Bipolar Bear! Apollos Creed! Genius!) (STM) (www.relapse.com)

DONNYBROOK

"No Love For The Insincere" CD

I reviewed this CD a few months ago because I saw the band play and was blown away and bought the CD. Well, the CD was sent in for review this month, so I am going to say again what I said then. And heed my words, children, because Donnybrook is the fucking shit. Imagine, if

you will, a young unjaded BLOOD FOR BLOOD doing "Hold It Down"-era MAD-BALL tunes. I am totally sold on this bad; lock, stock, and barrel.

Big riffs, juicy dance parts, the double-barrel assault of dual vocalists. It's all there and it is all worth your attention. Seriously, look into this band. If they are not huge by this time next year, there is no justice in the world. (STM) (www.1917records.com)



DONNYBROOK / PIECE BY PIECE

"There Goes The Neighborhood" CD

A split CD featuring two of Los Angeles' finest hardcore bands. Both bands bring the tasty old school tough guy shit. Raw, unpolished, pissed, and unrelenting. This represents all things great about the core. If you can't afford the fancy pants for the metalcore scene or the Dunks for the posi scene, this is the split for you. Fans of BLOOD FOR BLOOD, CRO-MAGS, MAD-BALL, 25TALIFE, POWERHOUSE, and any number of bands that have caused riots in Vets Halls across this fine nation. Buy it or pose, fuckers. (STM) (www.1917records.com)

DON'T LOOK DOWN

"The Fear In Love" CD

With the joys of big budgets, big producers, and modern technology, stuff sure does 'sound' good these days. I have to wonder about issues of passion, soul, and even songwriting, though. So, here you have the next MTV hopefuls, on this, their 2nd CD, moving from slick pop punk to something, er, more darker. Like an emasculated ALKALINE TRIO. (RK) (Nitro / www.nitrorecords.com)

DURGA

"Earn Your Redwings Mormon" 7" EP

A collection of five tracks on one 45. We're talking serious metalcore with female vocals. This bitch is tough. Songs about feminism, drinking and having fun. Sort of a hardcore quasi-new wave band. Not bad. (LD) (www.gloom.org)

EMPIRE

"Expensive Sound" CD

1981. Couple of GENERATION X form a band, record an LP, a demo, and play 4 shows. They mix spacy guitar (a la early SOUTHERN DEATH CULT / COCTEAU TWINS) with some ethereal pop, not unlike their anarcho-contemporaries, the MOB. Apparently they had a huge influence on the mid-80s DC scene, and the birth of emo, though I don't hear that at all. Nevertheless, this is a nice package, with all of their above output included. (RK) (contact: suspectsds@aol.com)

ENGINE DOWN

self-titled CD

This is one of those groups who straddles the fence between mainstream and "alternative." They seem to have their sights set on higher ground as this their fourth record is released on Lookout. To me, it's pretty dull. But if your thing is alternative guy-rock, this is for you. (LD) (www.lookoutrecords.com)

THE ESCAPED

"Rose City Hardcore" CD

This is the good shit right here. Straight up dual-vocal hardcore glory the way it was meant to be done. I put this thing onto my stereo and was immediately taken back to the days of the Berkeley Square hardcore shows when bands like POWERHOUSE, HOODS, REDEMPTION 87, and PRESSURE POINT would all play together (and fight together). Old school, hardcore with a gigantic oi and street punk influence. This thing is awesome. Recommended for fans of WAR-ZONE, AGNOSTIC FRONT, BAD BRAINS, SLAPSHOT, and SS. Look into this band. (STM) (www.blackoutrecords.com)

ESCAPE GRACE

self-titled CDEP

All those hurricanes are stirring up more angry hardcore down in Florida these days. If you dig that hardcore / metal hybrid, this might be your thing. Loud angry music with changing rhythms & brutal guitar. (LD) (www.city666.com)

EVERGREEN TERRACE

"At Our Worst" CD

What's going on with ET? First a covers album and now this, a collection of B-sides and demo tracks. I suppose this is necessary for the completists, but some new songs would be nice from this band, who fuse melodic rock (sorta kinda emo but not really) with delicious double-bass metalcore. Get this is you are already a fan, but first-timers may want to start elsewhere. (STM) (www.handofhoperecords.com)

FABULOUS DISASTER

"I'm A Mess" CD

FD is modeled after the great L7, SEVEN YEAR BITCH & other tough-girl acts of the early 90's. After some

time of Fat Wreck Chords, the band goes back to a smaller label. I heard that Cinder from TILT was gonna be fronting this band, but she is mysteriously absent. Regardless, this is a fun strut down memory lane. (LD) (Rodent Popsicle, no address)

FABULOUS DISASTER

"I'm A Mess" CDEP

6 tracks of spunky, spiky, rough-edged pop-punk. The ladies have slimmed down to a three-piece, with a new axewoman, and sound all the better for it. 5 originals, and JOE JACKSON done just right. (RK) (Rodent Popsicle / www.rodentpopsicle.com)

THE FALLOUT

"Turning Revolution Into Money" CD

These guys play out 70's punk in the vein of STIFF LITTLE FINGERS and the CLASH. They pull it all off quite nicely. Definitely worth your time. (FM) (www.longshotmusic.com)

THE FAUX / PLUNGE INTO DEATH split 7"

Well the B-side is so bad, that I'm afraid to listen to the A-side. It's bullshit keyboard plus guitar that claims to be dance punk. Please. The sample's the only thing good about it. THE FAUX reminds me of SUBTUNIX with their 'tweaked out new wave chaos. Not bad, but not wonderful. (LD) (www.misterrecords.com)

THE FIGHT

"Nothing New Since Rock N Roll" CD

Debut full length from the Brit teenagers. Their first EP came out Fat. They're being groomed for greater MTV things. SR-71s producer et al. Still, it's a lively blast of strong female-fronted melodic hardcore, with more than a nod to TILT's first couple of records. Enjoy em before the music machine sucks all the vitality from them... (RK) (Repossession Records / www.repossessionrecords.com)

FIRST CLASS

"Somewhere In The Grey" CD

Here's some new kids from Chicago that want to try their hands at the melodic punk rock thing. By the sound of them, they'd fit right in with the Fat Wreck Chords roster next to NOFX & NO USE FOR A NAME. The music 's super catchy and easy to listen to. No abrasive screaming or psycho lyrics, just a good time. (LD) (www.johannsfac.com)

FIRST STEP, THE

"Open Hearts And Clear Minds" CD

For unbridled straight edge pride hardcore goodness, you can't do much better than this band. Seriously, this is just tailor-made for all those great afternoons moshing across that squeaky hardwood floor of the local vets hall, dog piling your friends and pointing at the ceiling and getting all sweaty and leaving with a smile. (STM) (www.am-rqords.com)

THE FLAKES

"Straight Jacket" 7" EP

First off, this is not RUSSELL QUAN's Flakes. These Flakes are European and clearly not as good. Pretty

blah stuff here, sounds like early ELVIS COSTELLO filtered through DESCENDENTS or something. Immediately reminds me of CRUSH STORY, but hey! It ain't THAT good. Fun for the pop crowd—but isn't everything? (MC)
(Black JuJu Records, come.to / blackjuju)

FLOGGING MOLLY

"Within A Mile Of Home" CD

Third album. These guys really are the POGUES (even though the singer / songwriter is the only Irish dude and he previously played in FASTWAY!), with a little DROPKICK MURPHYS - but basically just the POGUES. The POGUES were real popular. These guys are too. Mandolin, accordion, fiddle and whistle - traditional Irish sounds and rhythms, married to punk rock. As I said, the POGUES...(RK)
(Side One Dummy)

FLOOR

"Dove" CD

With a name like FLOOR, it is appropriate that the bad be pretty damn heavy and they don't disappoint. Rad ultra heaviness in the vein of SLEEP or the MELVINS. This recording was done in 1994 and is just now coming out for the first time. Well worth the bread. (JC)

(No Idea / PO Box 14636 / Gainesville, FL 32604)



FLUT

"Puppy4Life" CD

This San Francisco based trio consists of Lily on vocals and bass, Brian on drums, and Jara alternating between keyboard and trumpet. Sparse, art rock driven, back-broken BREEDERS sounds with noir elements of jazz. In the final three songs, "Thing 2 Do," "Puppy 4 Life," and "Avenues," the band seem to let down their guard revealing reverent sounds akin to the bitter-sweet side of BETTIE SERVEERT and TANYA DONNELLY. Check it for yourself. (FM)
(www.flutmusic.com)

FOR THE WORSE

"The Chaos Continues" CD

Fuck yes! This thing is a goddamned riot fight. Balls out hardcore fury with all the fucking passion, power, and moshocity of a CBs matinee back in the day. This is hardcore stripped down and set on fire. Sooo Boston. Think of all the Mass great: SSD, SLAPSHOT, DYS, SHEER TERROR. Seriously, get this or throw away your NEGATIVE APPROACH T-shirt. (STM)
(www.bridge9.com)

FOURBANGER

"Imagination Overdose" CD EP

6 tracks of perfect precision math pop / emo MTV stuff. As such, it has no heart, soul, swing, or even catchy tunes. Oh well. (RK)
(www.fourbanger.com)

LARS FREDERIKSEN AND THE BASTARDS

"Viking" CD

Imagine RANCID hopping on fat Harley hogs all the while guzzling Jack Daniels with nicotine stained

paws and you will have Lars Frederiksen and the Bastards. Sixteen street rock songs produced and co-written by Tim Armstrong. They even pull off a surprisingly good version of the BLASTERS', "Marie, Marie." Not sure what is up with the GIRLS GONE WILD cast in the CD booklet, but the songs themselves rock you like razorblades in the gut. Crawl to the store for your beating. (FM)
(Hellcat Records / 2798 Sunset Blvd. / Los Angeles, CA)

FREEZE

"Freak Show / Crawling Blind" CD

A classic reissue from Boston's finest (and longest running). 2 LPs from the early 90s, when the FREEZE were mixing up speedy DEAD KENNEDYsque tunes with the 'new' melodic sound pioneered by BAD RELIGION / NOFX. Great music. Great lyrics. Great band. Great reissue. (RK)

(Dr. Strange Records / PO Box 1058 / Alta Loma, CA 91701)

FULLY DOWN

"No fate...But What We Make For Ourselves" CD

Like some kind of glam / emo half-breed, this band launches into a schizo mix of tunes. There's lots of intricate riffing that reminds me of the DARKNESS. But the lyrics are very mainstream emo-pop.

Obviously these guys can play. Good stuff for the fan of harmonious pop-punk. (LD)
(www.popculture.com)

GFK

"If Liberty Isn't Given, It Should Be Taken" CD

4th full length from this highly political Quebec metal / hardcore band. Lots of hoarse vocals, precision metal riffing and double kick drums. Imagine if CORROSION OF CONFORMITY went metal before they crossed over. Chugga Chugga fury. (RK)
(G7 Welcoming Committee Records / www.g7welcomingcommittee.com)

GIGANTOR / STEPMOTHERS

split 7"

Sort of an odd pairing here, but it works. Germany's Gigantor have been melodic punk mainstays for quite a long time which is pretty difficult to understand. On this split, they inject far too much gloss and metal wanking into AGENT ORANGE's classic, "Bloodstains." To their credit, they aren't the first to metalize this classic punker. Beach punks and Posh Boy enthusiasts might wanna grab this for The Stepmothers track "Innocent," which was recorded during their not-so-necessary German regrouping from 1994. I generally don't like to call vinyl releases pointless but this is awfully damn close. (MC)
(G-Force! Records, come.to / g-forcerecords)

LOLITA NO.18 / GIGANTOR

split 7"

GIGANTOR / EASY GRIP

split 7" EP

FUZZ BUBBLE / GIGANTOR

split 7"

GIGANTOR

"The 100! Club" CD

GIGANTOR

"Rhythm / Trouble" LP

I now have the collected works of the euro-pop punk band GIGANTOR. They seem to be quite prolific, but I'm not sure that I can recommend running out and grabbing up every one of them, but it would be a good idea to pick up a couple of them. Overall they are an above average example from the wave of European pop punk that has been exploding over the last few years. Cleaner than the APERS, not as souring as the TRAVOLTAS, way better than a lot of the rest. They shine the most on the 7"s, which would be the best kicking off point. LOLITA NO.18 is a fun, cutesy Japanese punk band and are worth checking out. FUZZ BUBBLE steals the splits with their perfect cover of the obscure KISS track "Let Me Know," that sounds dead on classic KISS, right down to every last Ace Frehley guitar noodle, yummy bubble gum pink vinyl on that one and a solid Tom Petty cover by GIGANTOR on the flip makes that the one to have. (JC)
(Nasty Vinyl / G-Force / T. Drescher / Worierhof / 30900 Wedermark / Germany)

HARDNOX

"Garage Sale" CD

Are you dead fucking serious with this? (STM)
(www.hardnoxproductions.com)

HOT WATER MUSIC

"The New What Next" CD

Remember when JAWBREAKER released "Dear You." People didn't like it so much. Like JAWBREAKER had all the rough edges (and catchy hooks) smoothed out in an attempt to get that radio (and MTV) hit. I feel the same way about this latest from HWM. It's them, of course, but compressed. The raspy bits, not to mention IRON



MAIDENesque driving tunes are gone. And I don't like it. I actually always thought side one of "Dear You" was good. And now lots of folks have come round. Mebbe I'll feel the same way about this one. But it'll take some persuading. (RK)
(Epitaph / www.epitaph.com)

IN ARMS REACH

self-titled 7"

This is that familiar blazing fast hardcore that has taken the world by storm in recent years, done with a very evident sincerity and passion that begs the listeners to mosh the fuck out of his bedroom. Thrashy hardcore goodness with delicious singalongs, this thing will certainly appeal to fans of the entire Bridge9 catalog. (STM)
(www.atm-records.com)

JAVELIN REIGN

"Wrath Of The Rice Cooker" CD

Emo metal from Canada. There is a lot of tech noise, but it is livened up with some impressive brooding

SOUNDSCAPE

atmospherics. If you dig SHAI HULUD and even a little COALESCE, you probably dig this. (STM)
(Lovelost / PO Box 14612 / Olympia, WA 98511-4612)

J CHURCH

"Society Is A Carnivorous Flower" CD

Perhaps it's the hot Austin air that has breathed a new life into this bay area punk legend. Along with JAW-BREAKER, these guys are an absolute staple here. Everything about them - their lyrics, their country undertones - makes them great. This brand new album has them sounding like they've gotten an energy shot in the ass.

Shedding their old skin, they are as fresh and new as your next door neighbor's garage band while maintaining that familiar J CHURCH sound. (LD)
(www.noidearecords.com)



JESUS WEPT

"Sick City" CD

It features members of XDISCIPLE ADX and it sounds like XDISCIPLE ADX, which is a good thing as that band ruled. Chunky metallic hardcore along the lines of CHOKEHOLD, DISEMBODIED, and all those other ERIE bands that roamed the Earth in the mid 90s. Good stuff for sure and a new band you need to look into. (STM)
(www.facedownrecords.com)

JESUS WEPT

"Sick City" CD

Rising from the ashes of xDISCIPLE A.D. comes this newly resurrected hardcore powerhouse. These boys are very focused on Christ and religion - all their songs deal with the issue. At times it seems a little silly, but for the most part, this new group demands your worship. (LD)
(www.facedownrecords.com)

JOEY'S LOSS

"Unwelcome Travelers & Other Brave Men" CD

From the back roads of Tennessee comes the third release from JOEY'S LOSS. They play post-hardcore / emo. I gotta say this band is much better than most. They take the time to come up with heartfelt lyrics that aren't cheesy. Recommended. (LD)
(www.indievisionmusic.com)

KALPANA

"Hors De Combat" CD

Yes, a record I can recommend! This is a debut from four-piece band from Rochester, NY. They play a mixture of indie metal & quiet instrumentals. I think there's a lot of promise here & fans of KINSKI should have a listen. (LD)
(www.redderrecords.com)

KANE HODDER

"The Pleasure To Remain So Heartless" CD

"We want to destroy the verse-chorus-verse thing." So says their bio, & I think they've accomplished their goal on this impressive record. It's part punk, part hardcore

& part pop, but to label it is to do it an injustice. The lyrics are intelligent & witty. The album just gets better as it runs through songs like "Heaven Help Me, I Love a Psychotic," and "Too Much Eddie Kendricks."

Recommended! (LD)

(www.suburbanhomerecords.com)

KILL YOUR IDOLS

"Live At CBGBs" CD

This cd highlights KYI in their most glorious forms: live as fuck. This band has always had that hardcore matinee at some vets hall feel (I totally don't mean that disrespectfully) and so of course a cd of them kickin' out their classics live is going to be a winner. If you are a fast of fast, pissed, and pure hardcore goodness, you should already be a fan of this band and should buy this because you love them

and should own this. If you aren't a fan, get it to hear what real hardcore sounds like in its natural environment. (STM)
(www.killyouridols.net)

LEIGHTON KOISUMI Featuring TITO AND THE BRAINSUCKERS

"When The Night Falls" CD

Fairly impressive collection of 60s covers from the famed MORLOCKS guru and his new Italian backing band. No new ground broken (obviously), but it's all well executed. For die-hards only, as I doubt this'll turn anybody else's heads. (MC)
(www.v2music.com)

KULTUR SHOCK

"Kultura-Dictatura" CD

What an interesting find. Here's some new metal from the Balkans. It's like metal / gypsy / protest music. Very different than your average metal band, yet the riffs are still strong. You get all kinds of new sounds ranging from samba beats to an operatic singer. (LD)
(www.koolarrow.com)

LANDLORD

"Man Made Machine" CD

A debut long-player of (left) political rock. They sound alot like the first CURE LP, minus the poppy bits. They'd love to be MIDNIGHT OIL, but don't have the rock. It's actually not bad, and sounds very early 80s. (RK)
(www.landlordmusic.com)

LAST OF THE FAMOUS

"Music Or The Misery" CD

Take the Lookout sound, add four handsome fresh faces & some cute lyrics & you've got this band. It's kind of eerie how much they stick to the formula. Like they really just want to fit in. Well, it makes for music that doesn't rise above all the other crap that's out there. (LD)
(www.456entertainment.com)

LEFTOVER CRACK

"Fuck World Trade" CD

Third album from the NYC ska-punk squatters, and it continues much in the same vein. They mix incredibly catchy ska with some raging thrash, moments of pure pop, and lots of pissed NYC hardcore. Think AGAINST ALL AUTHORITY skankin it up with NAUSEA, while

OPERATION IVY play the tag team with MDC. Produced by Steve Albini. Well worth digging out. (RK)

(Alternative Tentacles / www.alternativetentacles.com)

LUCKY STIFFS

"Today Will Follow You" CD

6 track debut. Upbeat punk, with more than a nod to ONE MAN ARMY and the SWINGIN' UTTERS. Enjoyable stuff. (RK)
(www.theluckystiffs.com)

M'S

self-titled CD

This is a very accomplished debut from these Chicago boys. Their sound is a lush mixture of 70's glam & 90's brit-pop. Reminds me of the VERVE & THE KINKS. The more I hear, the more I like it. With songs as rocking and beautiful as these, this band could hit the big time soon. (LP)
(www.brilliantev.tv)

MADELINE / SAW WHEEL

split 7"

Madeline Adams plays a cute songs called "Jailbait." It reminds me of the SOFTIES or something on Darla records. SAW WHEEL play acoustic tunes that remind me of BILLY BRAGG. This track is clearly better than side A. I hope to hear a full-length from this guy soon. (LD)
(www.hillbillystew.com)

MALKOVICH

self-titled CD

Art damage tech chaos with the occasional danceable beat. Think of DAUGHTERS, LOCUST, and dudes in San Diego with shitty haircuts and eating disorders. (STM)
(www.coalition-records.com)

THE MODERN DAY SAINT / SONNY

"Tennessee Isn't Too Far Away" CD

The small town emo band has got it pretty good. Think about it. You get to be a hero in your own community & there aren't 100 other bands trying to steal your gigs. Problem is when you look at these bands in the bigger picture, you might not see anything special. This may not be the next big thing on MTV, but more power to them for rocking out. (LD)
(www.forkinhand.com)

MORTICIA'S LOVERS

"Smash The Radio" CD

Wow! Morticia's Lovers are now on Sony? Too weird for words. I've never been a fan of these folks. They started off as a mediocre SUPERCHARGER clone and have "evolved" into BRIEFS wanna-bes. Well-executed covers of LOS REACTORS and PLASTIC BERTRAND are fine and dandy, but the originals leave me a little cold. Brightly colored and very cookie-cutter. (MC)
(www.v2music.com)

M.O.T.O.

"Single File" CD

Thank you Criminal IQ! When "Kill M.O.T.O." came out, I was completely sucked in by the homespun punkish pop these Chi-town cavemen churned out. Much to my surprise, they had been releasing records for over ten years before I caught wind of them (an embarrassing revelation for a know-it-all dork like me to make).

"Single File" collects all of the band's singles material from 1988 to the present and it's all pretty killer. M.O.T.O. has a knack for writing the simplest, shortest and most infectious songs out there. You will never be the same after hearing "It's So Big It's Fluorescent" or "Dick About It." Essential. (MC) (www.criminaliq.com)

MOTORHEAD

"Inferno" CD

Is there a more consistently great band out there than fuckin' MOTORHEAD? I don't think so. Yet another amazing record from the best of the New Wave Of British Heavy Metal bands (besides IRON MAIDEN, how many of those bands are even putting out records anymore?) I'm not going to take this space up explaining the virtues of Lemmy + company; if you don't own a MOTORHEAD record at this point, you're an asshole! If you would like to cure that condition, this CD is a great place to start. (JC) (Sanctuary / BMG)

NEPTUNE

"Intimate Lightning" CD

Can we say jagged? A in jagged melodies, chords, minds. The type of post-rock often referred to as angular. But I gotta admit, I was ultimately bored & turned it off pretty quick. (LD) (www.misterrecords.com)

NO REDEEMING SOCIAL VALUE

self-titled DVD

Fuck yes! Not a lot of people know about this band, which is such a tragedy. One of the greatest party bands of all time, NRSV picked up the bong and keg where MURPHYS LAW left it and they rode that shit through the 90s in a hot, sweaty, ridiculous flurry. If any band needed a DVD, it's this one. See NYHC at it's most fun, funny, and fucking crazy. (STM) (www.nrsv.com)

NORTH LINCOLN

"Apology" 7" EP

This band plays melodic punk rock & would fit in nicely with the younger crowd from NO IDEA. The four songs here are tight and catchy for the most part. I especially like "St. Rouge Red." It's just got a great beat & feel to it. Check it out. (LD) (www.thesupportgroup.cjb.net)

NOTHING SPECIAL

"Punker Mike And Poser Joe Learn To Hate The System" CD EP

LA party dudes that have been around for a while (and have released several previous CDs I believe) turn in a couple of new tunes, plus some demo tracks, and have discovered liberal politics. They don't like the president. Makes sense. Musically, they sound like a less-polished PROPAGANDHI. Lyrics aren't as good either, but I guess it beats singing about blunts. (RK) (Flipout Records / www.nothingspecialpunkrock.com)

NOT VERY GOOD

self-titled CD / 7"

Well, basically they are right—this isn't very good. It's not that bad though. The first song on side A was pretty cool and if they were consistently as good as that, they would be all right. The main things that this suffers

from is a really uneven production and a fairly weak performance, nothing that they can't overcome, maybe a name change would start them off in a positive direction. (JC)

(www.notverygood.org)

OBLIVION

"The Garden In the Machine" CD

Ew! This is so cheesy!! Reminds me of RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS & any number of other early 90's bands. I can't take much of it & chances are you won't be able to either. (LD)

(www.oblivionrockmusic.com)

OLD MAN GLOOM

"Christmas" CD

Finally a new OMG after three years! Seriously folks, this record is the shit! This is what new hardcore metal bands need to be living up to. But who could expect anything less from members of CAVE-IN, ISIS, & CONVERGE?! This is the supergroup. I can't say enough - consider my mind blown. (LD)

(www.tortugarecordings.com)

ONE DEAD THREE WOUNDED

"Paint The Town" CD

I love bands that know how to combine genres without going overboard or cheapening the effect by doing it for the wrong reasons. That is not the case with this impressive band. There is an awesome display of hardcore ferocity, matched with the evil technicality of metal, but then it's all slathered in some good ol' Southern rock. And rock is what this does. So few albums these days just rock. This is one of them. (STM)

(Lovelost / PO Box 14612 / Olympia, WA 98511-4612)

ONLY IN DREAMS

"Under This Burning Sky" CD

It's that mall emo rock with core tendencies that the kids seem to love these days. Fans of THRICE and TBS and whatnot will dig this. Good stuff if that sort thing floats your boat. (STM)

(www.popsmearerecords.com)

ON OUR OWN

"Now And Forever" CD

Fuck yes! There is something about hammer-and-nails tough guy hardcore that gets me all crazy when I hear it. This is another band for the hoodie-and-brass-knuckles contingents favorite band list. Heavy breakdown, moshy fast parts, pissed off vocals. You have everything you need in a core record right here. For fans of TERROR, UNTIL THE END, HOODS, BL13RE, and any other band whose shows you are, let's be honest, a little scared to attend. (STM)

(www.perfectvictimrecords.com)

ORANGES BAND

"Two Thousands" CD

Here's a collection of tracks from old-time indie band, ORANGES. Their style of mid-tempo weirdo rock is influenced by TOM PETTY & a little alt country. This cd features cuts from two earlier e.p.'s & one unreleased song. Pick this up if you were into college rock in the 90's. (LD)

(www.morphius.com)

OSTINATO

"Left Too Far Behind" CD

This band has a touch of dark ambient in them. It shows in the intros and the spaces between the most melodic parts of the songs. They also fill in a lot of post-art-rock stylings like GODSPEED, MOLASSES & ISIS. People - do not be afraid of slower music! This band still kicks ass while managing to sound beautiful. (LD)

(www.mainstreamrecords.de)

OUTBREAK

"You Make Us Sick" CD

Sample lyrics: "the world will be a better place when someone knocks you in the fucking face. Do me a favor, fucking die, so I don't have to listen to you bitch and cry." Seriously, does anything else need to be said? Blazing hardcore slathered in venom, cross TERROR with Sheer Terror (I guess that makes SHEER TERROR TERROR) and then thrash it out UNIT PRIDE style and play it faster than you



can possibly imagine. (www.bridge9.com)

PARTISANS

"Idiot Nation" CD

Third full length (and first in almost 20 years!) from these legendary Welsh punks. This record sounds very little like the speedy thrash that made them famous (on their first No Future releases), and sounds very much like "Give Em Enough Rope" era CLASH, minus the huge production. And pretty good it is too. (RK)

(Dr. Strange Records / PO Box 1058 / Alta Loma, CA 91701)

THE PEGS

self-titled 7"

From note one it's a whack in the face by a longboard. Two burnin' beach punk tracks, "Robot Romance" and "3 O'Clock Slop" from former members of the NUMBERS (not the indie band). Fans of the FAKES, the CROWD, and even the BRIEFS, will be jumping up and down. Hand numbered and limited with a special "first day" edition that is signed by the band. Hostage Records kicks the boottocks once again. (FM)

(Hostage Records / P.O. Box 7736 / Huntington Beach, CA 92615)

PIANO DRAG

"Possessions & Positions" CD

This is a delicate balance between electronic beats & post-punk hipster action. This record is multi-layered & you need to study it to absorb its intricacies. Ultimately, there might be too much going on here, but no worries. It's an impressive debut. Fans of later FUGAZI & the NY dance-punk scene, listen up. (LD)

(www.onecellrecords.com)

PILLOW FIGHT

"Tomorrow I'm Bringin' A Gun To School" CD

It's difficult not to compare a mohawked, female fronted, punk band to the DISTILLERS. This is fairly straight ahead melodic punk rock with some Los Angeles atti-

SOUNDSCAPE

tude and style. (FM)
(www.pillowfightpunks.com)

PISTOL GRIP

"Tear It All Down" CD

Third full length from the LA pissed punkers. 12 more tracks of 'street-punk'. It all starts to sound a bit samey too soon, but I'm sure the fans will be appropriately enamored. Some nice guitar flourishes...an energetic early CLASH, without the anthemic quality, unfortunately. (RK)
(BYO Records / www.byorecords.com)

PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS

"Up In Them Guts" CD

The Planes return, and they have brought the album title of the year with them. This record is awesome. Combine the mammoth stoner riffs of a HIGH ON FIRE or NEBULA with the rage of BLACK FLAG and the self-destructive zeal of GIVE UP THE GHOST and douse it all in the rock n' roll goodness of TURBONEGRO and you've got the motherfuckin' Planes. Get it, stupid. (STM)
(www.noidearecords.com)

PLOT TO BLOW UP THE EIFFEL TOWER

"If You Cut Us We Bleed" CD

A new one from a band that is so hip that it physically pains them to be near your lame ass. They've got the sound & crowd of the BLOOD BROTHERS. It's really good once you get past the 'tude. If you read Vice Magazine, buy this. (LD)
(www.hcnl.com)

THE POWER & THE GLORY

"Call Me Armageddon" CD

Any band that makes a REPO MAN reference gets love from me! Besides, this shit is unbelievable. OK, look, dudes like me dig different forms of heavy music. We dig hardcore, we dig metal, we dig noise, we dig doom. And this band embodies all of those! Fuck yes! Imagine a big fat jam session featuring members of DYSTOPIA, NEUROSIS, CONVERGE, ENEWETAK, BORN AGAINST, RINGWORM, and TODAY IS THE DAY. Pretty sweet, huh? Well, that's pretty much exactly what this album is. If you want to hear the soundtrack for the end of the world, this is it right here. (STM)
(www.deathwishinc.com)

PSYCHO-PATH

"Desinvoltura" CD

Well, here you have an average band that is equal parts JESUS LIZARD & QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE. Except that they're from Slovenia (look it up). Oh, and they have a badass female singer named Melee (look that up too). Not bad at all. (LD)
(www.morenoiselessmusic.de)

Q AND NOT U

"Power" CD

What happened to this band? I saw them at Coachella and they totally rocked. But this new disc is filled with a mixture of hipster posturing and whiney BECK-style falsetto. This band has totally lost their edge & seem to have traded their post-punk souls in for trendoid ones. (LD)
(www.dischord.com)

RATTLE BATTLE

"Push Up" CDEP

Hard to believe any remotely rockin' band would make a 2 song CD in favor of a 45, but hey-it's a new world out there. It's a shame though, as the two tunes here are better than I expected. "Push Up" is an up-tempo garagey rocker, definitely the sort of tune that could get any bar crowd groovin'. "Meltdown In Minneapolis" doesn't fare quite as well, as it's pretty boring hard rock. These are apparently hardcore guys giving riff-rock a try. Gee, has that ever happened? (MC)
(www.perfectvictim.com)

RAWTONES

self-titled CD

This band seems to be trying desperately hard to sound like RANCID and they fall far from that mark. This CD also has the distinction of having the worst backing vocals that I think I have ever heard. (JC)
(Rawtones)

RED LIGHTS FLASH

"Free..." CD

Political melodic hardcore - very much in the vein of GOOD RIDDANCE and STRIKE ANYWHERE. They're actually from Australia, though you couldn't tell that from listening to this. A spot on, in your face 'Fat-Wreck' production helps too. They sound a lot like RANDY before they went rock n roll. Not that Sweden is Australia, of course; but hardcore is hardcore... (RK)
(A-F Records / www.a-frecords.com)

REHASHER

Off Key Melodies" CD

This is a band full of members of LESS THAN JAKE, ARMY OF PONCH and SAVAGE BREWTALLITY. Pretty standard issue skate rock, played well, but not so memorable. (JC)
(No Idea / PO Box 14636 / Gainesville, FL 32604)

REPUTATION

"To Force a Fate" CD

So polished you could see your face in it. That's my description of this new one from Lookout. You might think they'd be punk rock considering the label, but no. It's all shiny happy power-pop with girl vocals.

Think NEW PORNOGRAPHERS. (LD)
(www.lookoutrecords.com)

RESCUE

"Phone Numbers" CDEP

Debut 6 tracker of metal-edged screamo / hardcore. They claim to be influenced by MINERAL and SLAYER. Not sure I hear that, but my ears aren't attuned, I guess, to the subtleties of these, ah, modern sounds. (RK)
(United Edge Records / www.theunited.unitededgerecords.com)

RIGHTEOUS JAMS

"Boston Straight Edge" 7"

You bet your ass Righteous Jams. Never before has a

band's name been so applicable. This Mass troop kick the jams out like motherfuckers on a mission. What you get here is their demo on seven inch. Such awesome hardcore glory here that absolutely keeps in mind it's Bostonian forefather, most noticeable DYS and early SSD. And to round out the purity of it's core-ness, they even go BRAINS for the dub sweetness of the final track. Don't be a dipshit. Go buy this seven inch so that when they break up and everyone talks about what an amazing band they were, you'll be able to bust out this sweet piece of vinyl. I mean, really, Boston bands don't really stay together or anything. Hahaha. It doesn't really need to be mentioned, as this band can stand on it's own two feet, but RJ contains members of MENTAL and STAND AND FIGHT.
(www.am-records.com)

RISE AGAINST

"Siren Song Of The Counter Culture" CD

A rather ironic title for their major label debut. As you'd expect, their Fat / FACE TO FACE sound has been suitably refined for radio consumption, pretty much following the trajectory of UNWRITTEN LAW. It's pretty good, if you like that sort of thing. (RK)
(Geffen)

UTES, THE

"Wish You Never Knew" CD

Old school thrashy hardcore punk featuring members of CUT THE SHIT, DOWN IN FLAMES, and TEAR IT UP. Dude, look who is in the band. You know what this sounds like. If you mosh in a circle and skate straight, this platter is for you.
(STM)
(www.coalition-records.com)

RIVER CITY REBELS

"Hate To Be Loved" CD

Fourth full length. They're really going for that whole punk / glam NEW YORK DOLLS meets DEAD BOYS love em and leave em wild boys of sex drugs and rock n roll type thing. Oh yeah, and they have horns too. I guess they do it ok. (RK)
(Victory Records / www.victoryrecords.com)

RUINING TOMORROW

"Set Sail For Destruction" CD

This is a great little punk rock EP. It's back to basics in the best way. For fans of classic punk rock with a bit of a metal edge. (LD)
(Rodent Popsicle Records, no address)

SAFES

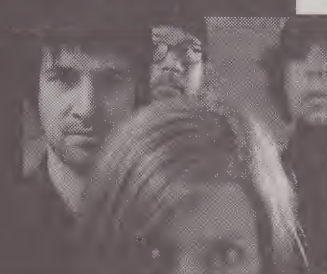
"Boogie Woogie Rumble" CDEP

5 tracks of lower-fi thrashy garage punk. Energetic for sure. Lots of guitars, and they're good at what they do. Not the kind of thing that lights my fire, but they're fairly smokin nonetheless. (RK)
(Pro-Vel Records / www.provelrecords.com)

NIKOLA SARCEVIC

"Lock-Sport-Krock" CD

Goddam. I guess when folks sell enough records, labels have to indulge. This is a solo (largely acoustic) outing, from MILLENCOLIN's singer / songwriter / guitarist. This verges from bad early BOB DYLAN to sad coffee house open mic stuff - all professionally played and produced, of course. Why oh why do people



bother...(RK)
(Burning Heart / Epitaph / www.burningheart.com)

SATURDAY LOOKS GOOD TO ME

"Every Night" CD

A very gentle record full of lots of melodic gems. Comes across like a mix of the VELVET UNDERGROUND and a '60s girl group like the SHANGRI-LAS or RONNETTES. Totally hip record. (JC)
(Polyvinyl / Post Box 7140 / Champaign, IL 61826-7140)

SAW WHEEL / MILKCRATE RUSTLERS split 7"

How can I not love this little 45? The MILKCRATE RUSTLERS play an old Arkansan hillbilly song called "Hogeye." And being from Arkansas, it's especially great to hear someone keeping that sound alive. The SAW WHEEL play a nice one called "County Lines" that reminds me of walking through the woods at night. Turns out I know these people. Hi Allison! Good job on this!! (LD)
(www.hillbillystew.com)

SAY ANYTHING

"...Is A Real Boy" CD

Eclectic indie rock effort. The ultimate record for the hip, shoegazer, backpack wearing beard, who spends most of his time in his bedroom, polishing his white belt and listening to the GET UP KIDS. Written and performed by a kid who does likewise. It's not bad. Just not my thing. Let's hope it's yours. (RK)
(Doghouse America Inc)

SCATTER THE ASHES

"Devout / The Modern Hymn" CD

I love when Nashville bands rock out. And this one delivers. Lately Epitaph has attempted to spiff themselves up a little, breaking away from the punk stereo-type. Growth is good, people. And this band that's reminiscent of SPARTA is good too. (LD)
(www.epitaph.com)

SECOND GLANCE

"Close Your Eyes And See" CD

Independently produced and released debut from this Ottawa quartet. They did a great job, and produced an album of immaculate modern 'punk'. Or is it indie, or emo? Drive-Thru Records should snap em up. (RK)
(www.thesecondglance.com)

SEAMONSTERS

"Turning Tide" CD

It's OK to talk a big game in your press kit about how you're the "real thing" & how you're not trendy or focused on album sales. That's all fine. But it's better when you can back that up with a truly amazing record. Unfortunately, this CD falls pretty far short of the mark. It's really just a collection of decent indie-rock songs - no more, no less. (LD)
(www.peterecords.com)

THE SETUP

"Nine Kinds Of Death" 7"

Big fat hardcore anthems with just the right amount of metal. Huge singalongs and dance parts, but also a great sense of song structure and dynamics. Recommended for fans of THE HOPE

CONSPIRACY. (STM)

(www.am-records.com)

SET YOUR GOALS

self-titled CD

Norcal's newest contribution to the world is also their brightest. Members of others Norcal bands (the awesome TIME FOR LIVING among them) come together to create the perfect hybrid of pop punk, hardcore, and emo. You have a very catchy foundation of KID DYNAMITE melodic core, some super accessible NEW FOUND GLORY pop punk, and tasty dancefloor warrior breakdowns ala SICK OF IT ALL. This is such a good CD, and amazingly, it's technically their demo! Find it. Buy it. Smile while you mosh. (STM)
(Straight On Records / 218 Grand Ave / Long Beach, CA. 90803)

SHADOWS FALL

"The War Within" CD

It seems SHADOWS FALL just keep banging out the releases one after another, but here is the catch: they don't suck yet!

This band seems to have an endless supply of glorious metal. And that's exactly what this is: metal. The pure shit that makes no bones about it. SF is one of the greatest modern day metal bands and you'd be a fool to not be a fan. (STM)
(www.centurymedia.com)

SHADOWS FALL

"The War Within" CD

OK all you metal-heads, listen up. There's a new one from up-and-coming SHADOWS FALL. They play a combo of new-school metal & old-school thrash. This is their fourth record & it's sure to be a hit with the hordes of hipsters that are swarming the black metal bins. (LD)
(www.centurymedia.com)

THE SIMPLETONES

"I Have A Date" CD

I'm a native Northern Californian. I'm ideologically opposed to 99% of what Southern California has to offer. That said, I simply can't shake the soft spot I have for The Simpletones. Surely one of the finest beach punk bands, The Simpletones matched the bite of their punkiest moments with some of the catchiest songs of the period. The psychology of the band is pure suburban teen angst. From the rebellious "I Like Drugs" to the sweetie-pie title track (their most well-known tune), it's hard to tell if they were wolves in sheep's clothing or the other way around. Either way, it works. (MC)
(Re-Force Records, re-force@gigantor.de)

SINCE BY MAN

"A Love Hate Relationship" CD

Post-hardcore is where its at. It's got all of the guts of traditional HC plus sex appeal. What self-respecting boy in their early 20's could resist? This band has the same vibe as the BLOOD BROTHERS. Although BB are leaps & bounds better, this band is on the

right track. (LD)
(www.revelationrecords.com)

THE SINGULARITY

self-titled CD

The SINGULARITY are a newer, scrappy punk band out of the San Francisco East Bay Area. A little AMERICAN STEEL a little CRIMPSPRINE, a touch of ECONO-CHRIST and plenty of energy. Pretty fun. This is self-produced and a real no frills kind of release, cool to check out now and shows promise for the future. (JC)
(P.O. Box 5060 / Alameda, CA 94501)

SIX

"The Price Of Faith" CD

This powerful outfit combines the modern day crossover metal of Machine Head, Metallica, and Fear Factory with classic influences such as SABBATH, PRIEST, and MAIDEN, with liberal doses of pop rock bands such as U2 and CLUTCH. An interesting mix that creates an invigorating listening experience. (Scoot)
(www.embryorecords.com)

SLUNT

"The Best Thing" CD EP

Debut 5 tracks. 2 dudes, 2 chicks play rawk, of the dirty, er, sexy variety, of course. Early L7 / 7 YEAR BITCH type thang. Lots of cleavage, short skirts and bad goatees (is there a good goatee!?) on display. Oh yeah. Ahem. (RK)

(Repossession Records / www.repossession-records.com)

FRANK SMITH

"Burn This House Down" CD

Alt.country is at its best when it makes you feel dreamy & lazy - like a long drive through the desert. This cd has all the right elements for that, and also more of the upbeat boot-stompin' stuff. Very good for SON VOLT& HANDSOME FAMILY fans. (LD)
(www.lonesomerecordings.com)

THE SNAKE, THE CROSS, THE CROWN

"Mander Salis" CD

This release has a bit of a SHUDDER TO THINK vibe to it, with more grounded lyrics, but still souring vocals. An interesting and thoroughly enjoyable record, plus they even add a taste of space-age keyboard. (JC)
(Equal Vision / P.O. Box 38202 / Albany, NY 12203)

THE SNAKEPIT BOOK

By Ben Snakepit

Proving that just because you can draw comics and crank out enough to fill up a book doesn't mean that you should. Page after page of strips that are almost totally devoid of insight or revelation, with lots of, "I went there, I did this, I took a bong hit, I fell asleep," without ever really expanding on anything. After about the third time that the author mentions that he went to a party that was lame without offering me any clue as to why, I am not just thinking about the amount of time of mine that he is wasting, but of the poor damn trees that died for this printing. Snakepit could really benefit by looking up some Brian Walsby, an artist that was superb at this sort of scene chronicling and lampooning. (JC)

(Gorky Press / P.O. Box 42024 / L.A., CA 90042)

SOUNDSCAPE

SOLIDARITY PACT

"Concrete Don't Give a Fuck" CD

For a CD that starts out with a sample from CHICAGO - the musical - this is pretty punk rock. Skate rock rhythms & hardcore style vocals. Very fun & they've got lots of energy that comes across & shakes you by the ears. (LD)
(www.thesolidaritypact.cjb.net)

STAND AND FIGHT

"Together We Win" CD

This band has been making waves for a little while and now they deliver a full length of pissed-off edge anthems. While sXe hardcore has never really done anything terribly original, S&F do what they do masterfully and it will get any dancefloor whirling in no time. Fans of YOT, CHAIN, dunks, and crewcuts will love this band. (STM)
(www.bridge9.com)

STIFF LITTLE FINGERS

"Guitar And Drum" CD

I believe this is their third or fourth full length since their reformation (not counting the numerous live records) in the early 90s. It is, of course, nothing like their first couple of classic, raw, anthemic punk LPS. It's not a million miles away from their last couple with the original band - "Now Then" and "Go For It." Not unlike mid-period JAM (Bruce Foxton, of course, joining them shortly after the reformation). Tuneful, power-pop with bite. If you like that stuff, later UNDERTONES stylings, you might dig this. "Inflammable Material" it definitely isn't; which is fine by me too. (RK)
(Kung-Fu Records / www.kungfurecords.com)



THE STRANGER'S SIX

"The Inaugural" CD

Band out of San Diego that mixes rock and roll with a feel more modern punk bands like A.F.I. and a little hint of the Screamo hardcore. Pretty cool six-song initial offering. (JC)
(8479 Melrose Lane / El Cajon, CA 92021)

SWITCHBLADE

self-titled CD

I am not a huge fan of instrumental records, but this one certainly did captivate me. This is the soundtrack to be haunted. The darkest possible atmosphere imaginable. (STM)
(www.icasusrecords.com)

TALK ENGINE

"Something For Junior" CD

A little gift for W on his (hopefully) last birthday in the White House. What you have here is some gnarly, spiteful spoken word, over an electrified

rock backing. Think PATTI SMITH / FUGS / MC5 / WAYNE KRAMER and you'll be pretty close to the mark. (RK)
(www.talkengine.net)

TEXAS THIEVES

"Killer On Craigs List" CD

New band from San Francisco who sound like old bands from south of there. Been listening, apparently, exclusively to the old skate rock bands of the early 80s - MIA, FACTION, JFA and ZERO BOYS. They do it just fine, though it all starts to sound a little samey after a while..(RK)
(Dr. Strange Records / PO Box 1058 / Alta Loma, CA 91701)



TOTAL CHAOS

"Punk Invasion" CD

America's answer to the EXPLOITED is still going, er, strong. 3 CDs on Epitaph, a couple on Cleopatra, and now yet another one. Like their Scottish idols, they aren't up to much on the originality, or intelligence stakes. But look pretty punk (unlike Wattie, they still have their hair!), and churn out more blasts of snotty UK '82 punk with metal solos. For the truly converted, and those that don't know any better. (RK)
(SOS Records / www.sosrecords.us)

TRAILER PARK TORNADOS

"Don't Mind The Maggots" 7" EP

Wow, this is some very uneasy listening! Buffalo's TPT specialize in no-fi, no frills punk rock, but are too wild to pin down into any specific school. They sound very out of place in the current crop of Big Neck bands, (dis)functioning in some middle-ground between the early 90s tough-guy thuggery like MUD CITY MANGLERS and today's Killed By

Death worship. Good stuff. Hopefully they can build on this single's spite and unleash a dangerous long player. (MC)
(www.bigneckrecords.com)

TUSK

"Tree Of No Return" CD

The story of a walk in the woods gone terribly wrong. The second album from TUSK is just amazing in its brutality and sheer evil. It's everything you love about PELICAN set to a black metal soundtrack. Plainly put, this album rules! (LD)
(www.tortugarecordings.com)

URINALS

"Negative Capability...Check It Out" CD

This is the URINALS release that you need to pick up. The band had put a full length out of newer stuff recently, but this chronicles all of the classic songs. 31 tracks of art damaged spastic punk. For those who haven't heard them, they are best compared to the bigger bands that they influenced like the MINUTEMEN or early MEAT PUPPETS. (JC)
(Warning Label / 49 School St / Arlington, MA 02476)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Another Year On The Streets Vol. 3" CD

15 new and unreleased tracks from the current Vagrant roster. From the drivel of DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL to the wonderful guitar drenched melancholy of ALKALINE TRIO. Plus MONEEN, NO MOTIV, HEY MERCEDES, NEW AMSTERDAMS, GET UP KIDS, SAVES THE DAY, PAUL WESTERBERG, HOT ROD CIRCUIT, a blast from the past from ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT and more. It also has a DVD with a bunch of videos on it for the technologically enhanced. (RK)
(Vagrant / www.vagrant.com)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"BC Records Compilation" CD

This is an amazing compilation because it actually does its intention. It made me want to listen to the featured bands. You've probably not heard of THE BANNED or GENERAL MIGGS, but they're great! Check out this unique comp & next time you're in upstate NY, look out for these bands. (LD)
(www.bcsecs.com)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Hearts Bleed Passion Vol. 1" CD

A comp of what's fresh & happening in screamo these days. Lots of interesting stuff on here. Most of these bands deserve attention. Example: FORGOTTEN ARRIVAL - with their metal / emo turn on a dime rhythms. Also, NESHAMA - with their super-metal strumming & circle pit beat. Check it out. (LD)
(www.indievisionmusic.com)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Hopelessly Devoted To You Vol. 5" CD

The latest Hopeless Records sampler - new and unreleased tracks from AGAINST ALL AUTHORITY, AMBER PACIFIC, AVENGED SEVEN-FOLD, BREAK THE SILENCE, COMMON RIDER, MELEE, STAIRWELL and THRICE. Still leading the pack in terms of variety and quality, from ska-punk to indie-pop to metal and more - Hopeless has it all! Plus videos too!! (RK)
(Hopeless Records / www.hopelessrecords.com)



VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Lonesome Recordings Vol. 1" CD

There's some pretty nice cuts on this first compilation from Lonesome Recordings. The first track by READ YELLOW reminds me of the HOT SNAKES. Then you've got indie favorites PIEBALD & HERO PATTERN. All in all, a good comp for grown-ups who still love music and aren't too jaded by all the bull-

shit. (LD)
(www.lonesomerecordings.com)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Maybe This Christmas Tree" CD

They should probably re-title this one "Have Yourself a Shoe-Gazing Christmas." Lots of cool and mellow bands like The POLYPHONIC SPREE, RAVEONETTES, IVY and DEATH CAB FOR CUTIE and you favorite alterna-christian music types (on an X-mas comp it seems more appropriate), like PEDRO THE LION and JARS OF CLAY. ROYAL CROWN REVUE featuring VICKY TOFOYA have a cool track on this that unfortunately stands out like a sore thumb due to its upbeat, jazzy nature, and would probably be served better on another comp. Take some Quaaludes (if you can find them—if not, a few Vicodin will do) and bliss out to the bitchin-est Christmas comp I have listened to all summer. (JC) (EMI)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"The Nail Vol. 2" CD

Wow. Now that's what I call gospel!! Not quite, but this comp is packed with 21 tracks of wholesome punk from Christian label, Tooth & Nail. If you like MXPX check this out. Recommended for the young & impressionable. (LD)
(www.toothandnail.com)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Newest Industry: A Compilation 2002-2004" CD

A label sampler from undoubtedly one of the best punk labels around today. Probably the closest comparison is No Idea (with whom they are BLACK COUGAR SHOCK UNIT, ANNALISE and a couple more.) But best of all, they've been at the forefront of the new wave of melodic hardcore bands around the world - bands such as the ENABLERS, NRA, PHOENIX FOUNDATION, SHONBEN - who draw on the HUSKER DU / LEATHERFACE / REPLACEMENTS axis, and run with it. There are very few labels (or samplers) where I can wholeheartedly recommend almost every release without reservation. This is definitely one of them. Don't be slow in making this yours. (RK)
(Newest Industry / www.thenewestindustry.com)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"The Only Constant Is Change" CD

Well you can't call Volcom stingy. This two disc comp boasts 46 tracks - most of them rare. Artists range from old favorites like RISE AGAINST, PENNYWISE & TURBONEGRO to lesser known gems like BRAZIL, AUTHORITY ZERO & DEATH BY STEREO. Get your mom to pick this up for you. (LD)
(www.volcoment.com)



VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Punk Rock Is Your Friend Vol.5" CD

Latest Kung Fu sampler. New, unreleased tracks from TSUNAMI BOMB, USELESS ID and NO USE FOR A NAME. Obscure and weird stuff from OZMA, UNDERMINED, VANDALS. Live efforts from GUTTERMOUTH, MATCHES, ADOLESCENTS and PISTOL GRIP. Lots of sound bits from their new movie and 5 videos. Oh yeah, plus some previously released stuff. Certainly a fair example of the diverse stuff they're doing these days. Just wish I liked more of it. (RK)
(www.kungfurecords.com)

VARIOUS ARTISTS

"Streets Of America: Hardcore Punk & Oil Compilation" CD

18 bands. I must confess I haven't heard of any of them. DEAD HEROS are definitely the best of a decidedly mediocre / uninspired bunch, with an amped up (and melodic) OI POLLOLish effort. Other also-ran's include CRIMINAL INTENT, OHIO RIVER RATS, FRONTLINE SOLDIERS, BREAKING POINT, REASON TO FIGHT, SKIN-DISORDER and DOWNLOW, who present a REAGAN YOUTH cover. (RK)
(United Riot Records / www.angelfire/indie/unit-driorecords)

VIETNAM / YUKIGUNI split CD

What we have right here is a no-holds-barred inter-continental street fight. These two bands are both masters of the hip hop-flavored tough guy hardcore that has been pushed aside to make way for trendy metalcore but is twice as genuine and brutal as any dude in hot pants singing about his ex. These bands bring back the fight or dance spirit of mid-90s hardcore and they do it without error. Fans of MADBALL, 25TALIFE, HATEBREED, and VOD should most definitely check out these bands. (STM)
(www.straightup-rec.com)

VOODOO GLOW SKULLS / LEFT ALONE

"Broke My Heart" CD EP

Two tracks a piece. LEFT ALONE provide a couple of upbeat RANCID (CLASH era) rockers - one with horns, one without. VGS provide two Spanish language Latin ska efforts. I've never been too hot on VGS, but they did used to be huge, for some reason. (RK)
(Smelvis Records / www.smelvisrecords.net)

WASHINGTON SOCIAL CLUB

"Catching Looks" CD

Throw caution & bad attitude to the wind & come join the pop parade. WSC are here to counteract all that depressing emo & post-punk. They just want you to dance - "it doesn't matter what you wear..." Check out this young band from DC. Hopefully they'll be around for a long time. (LD)
(www.badmanrecordingco.com)

WE BE THE ECHO

"Cubist Music" CD

If this band were as good as their song titles, they would be great. Unfortunately, they are not. 5 song instrumental ep that, at its best, is entertaining in its trickiness and intricacies. At their worst, which is more often, they sound like a moody

guitar class practicing their scales, while a drummer works on his rolls and fills off in the corner. Overall, it's music that's probably lots of fun to play, but not so much to listen to. (JC)
(Chuckbeat /)

WESTMINSTER BABY

"Oh No It's An EP" CD

If there's a band out there leading an early 60's mod revival, it's this one. Listening to this 8 song disc brings back memories of British 60's rock. Its just as catchy & rockin'. And what a refreshing change from all those 70's glam rip-offs we've been swimming in. Great! (LD)
(www.i-surrender.com)

GARY WILSON

"Mary Had Brown Hair" CD

If you're looking for the bizarre, you've found it. Gary's career began in the late 70's, covering himself in flour & taking the stage barefoot, surrounded by mannequins. Many years later, he had something of a revival. And now he's back with a new record full of electro-avante garde. Crazyshit. (LD)
(www.stonesthrow.com)

WINTER SOLSTICE

"The Pulse Is Overrated" CD

Brand new metalcore band out of Virginia. If you're into DARKEST HOUR & AS I LAY DYING, this is for you. Alternating between melodic moments & all out metal chaos, this revival adds another name to the pile of bands that have crossed the bridge from hardcore to metal. (LD)
(www.harvestearth.com)

YEAR FUTURE

"The Hidden Hand" CD

And excellent new EP from the members of VSS, DEAD AND GONE, & TALK IS POISON. Trust me, you need to get yourself a copy of this. A wonderful mixture of history & fresh hardcore. (LD)
(www.goldstandardlabs.com)

YESTERDAY'S RISING

"When We Speak, We Breathe" CD EP

Debut ep. 5 tracks of precision, math rock / indie / screamo. This stuff leaves me totally cold. But apparently warms the hearts of adolescents on the Warped Tour everywhere. (RK)
(Fearless / www.fearlessrecords.com)

ZOLAR X

"Timeless" CD

The latest in a long succession of really out there, art-damaged rock and roll bands. From ALICE DONUT to the CAUSY WAY and now ZOLAR X. A.T. has a penchant for finding the real freaks out there. This one is a fringe classic that actually came out in the Glam era. A lost treasure of a band, with a crazy history that Jello recently brought back to earth for us. Musically, I would say this falls somewhere between JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR and MEATLOAF, with a space age (ala Flash Gordon) running theme and the requisite hint of Ziggy-era BOWIE. Check out the CD for the full story. This is well worth picking up. (JC)
(Alternative Tentacles / P.O. Box 419092 / San Francisco, CA 94141-9092) ☛

sAMPler

Volume 11

**If you like what you hear,
check out the info below
and go out and buy a
record from the artists.**



TRACK 2
BAND: HOPESFALL
SONG: "Icarus" (Unmastered)
RECORD: A- Types
RELEASE DATE: 11/2/04
LABEL: Trustkill Records
WEB: www.trustkillrecords.com



TRACK 1
BAND: THE EXPLOSION
SONG: "Here I Am"
RECORD: Black Tape
RELEASE DATE: 10/5/04
LABEL: Virgin Records
WEB: www.virginrecords.com
www.theexplosion.net



TRACK 3
BAND: FULL BLOWN CHAOS
SONG: "Apocalypse"
RECORD: Wake the Demons
RELEASE DATE: 10/5/04
LABEL: Stillborn Records
WEB: www.stillbornrecords.com
www.fullblownchaos.com



TRACK 4

BAND: SHADOWBOXER

SONG: "Black Cadillac Crashes Into The White House"

RECORD: Dark At The End Of The Tunnel

RELEASE DATE: 11/2/04

LABEL: State OF Grace Records

WEB: www.stateofgracehardcore.com



TRACK 5

BAND: REFLUX

SONG: "Between The Pyramid And The Eye"

RECORD: The Illusion Of Democracy

RELEASE DATE: 11/2/04

LABEL: Prosthetic Records

WEB: www.prostheticrecords.com



TRACK 6

BAND: THE FIGHT

SONG: "Revolution Calling"

RECORD: Nothing New Since Rock 'N' Roll

RELEASE DATE: 11/16/04

LABEL: Repossession Records

WEB: www.repossessionrecords.com

www.thefightmusic.com



TRACK 7

BAND: QUANTICE NEVER CRASHED

SONG: "Lighthouses"

RECORD: Quantice Never Crashed

RELEASE DATE: 10/19/04

LABEL: The Death Scene

WEB: www.QuanticeNeverCrashed.com



TRACK 8

BAND: DIECAST

SONG: "Medieval"

RECORD: Tearing Down Your Blue Skies

RELEASE DATE: 11/19/04

LABEL: Century Media Records

WEB: www.bhcdiecast.com



TRACK 9

BAND: LET IT BURN

SONG: "Your Sweetness"

RECORD: The Expanding Universe

RELEASE DATE: 11/9/04

LABEL: Chunksaah Records

WEB: www.chunksaah.com

www.letitburnonline.com



TRACK 10

BAND: DISSONANT

SONG: "Suffocating In A Dead Scene"

RECORD: Suffocating In A Dead Scene

RELEASE DATE: Out Now!

LABEL: All Or Nothing Records

WEB: www.allornothingrecords.com



TRACK 11

BAND: STEREOTYPERIDER

SONG: "You're Not Safe With Us"

RECORD: Prolonging The Inevitable

RELEASE DATE: 11/30/04

LABEL: Suburban Home Records

WEB: www.suburbanhomerecords.com,

www.stereotyperider.com

www.purevolume.com/stereotyperider



TRACK 12

BAND: SATURDAY LOOKS GOOD TO ME

SONG: "When The Party Ends"

RECORD: Every Night

RELEASE DATE: Out Now!

LABEL: Polyvinyl Record Co.

WEB: www.polyvinylrecords.com

www.saturdaylooksgoodtome.com



TRACK 13

BAND: CALIBAN

SONG: "The Beloved and the Hatred"

RECORD: The Opposite From Within

RELEASE DATE: 11/5/04

LABEL: Abacus Recordings

WEB: www.calibanmetal.com



TRACK 14

BAND: NINE

SONG: "Anxiety Report"

RECORD: Killing Angels

RELEASE DATE: 10/5/04

LABEL: Deathwish Records

WEB: www.deathwishinc.com



TRACK 15

BAND: CONVERGE

SONG: "Eagles Become Vultures"

RECORD: You Fail Me

RELEASE DATE: Out Now!

LABEL: Epitaph Records

WEB: www.convergecult.com



TRACK 16

BAND: DRY KILL LOGIC

SONG: "Paper Tiger"

RECORD: The Dead And Dreaming

RELEASE DATE: 10/5/04

LABEL: Repossession Records

**WEB: www.repossessionrecords.com,
www.drykilllogic.com**



TRACK 17

BAND: TSUNAMI BOMB

SONG: "Dawn On A Funeral Day"

RECORD: The Definitive Act

RELEASE DATE: Out Now!

LABEL: Kung Fu Records

WEB: www.kungfurecords.com



TRACK 18

BAND: GFK

**SONG: "The End of Our Contribution to
Modern Slavery"**

RECORD: If Liberty Isn't Given, It Should Be Taken

RELEASE DATE: Out Now!

LABEL: G7 Welcoming Committee Records

WEB: www.g7welcomingcommittee.com



TRACK 19

BAND: ODD PROJECT

SONG: "Silver Screen Lovers"

RECORD: The Second Hand Stopped

RELEASE DATE: Out Now!

LABEL: Indianola Records

WEB: www.oddproject.com

www.indianolarecords.com



TRACK 20

BAND: HALFWAYHOME

SONG: "Four Months Until The Swarm"

RECORD: A Brand New Subdivision

RELEASE DATE: Out Now!

LABEL: The Death Scene

WEB: www.halfwayhomerock.com



TRACK 21

BAND: HOT WATER MUSIC

SONG: "The End Of The Line"

RECORD: The New What Next

RELEASE DATE: Out Now!

LABEL: Epitaph Records

WEB: www.epitaph.com

ALSO AVAILABLE:
 KILOWATTHOURS/THE RUM DIARY - SPLIT CD
 THE WPP - BAAMI JAAMI CDEP
 THE RUM DIARY - POISONS THAT SAVE LIVES CD/ORANGE VINYL
 UNDER A DYING SUN - SUPERNOVA CD/RED VINYL

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BLACK TAPE

IN STORES OCTOBER 5

THE EXPLOSION!

PROD. BY JEFFREY L. ROSEN
WRITTEN BY JEFFREY L. ROSEN
DIRECTED BY JEFFREY L. ROSEN

PRODUCED BY JEFFREY L. ROSEN



WARNER BROS. ENTERTAINMENT, INC.



NEW LINE PRODUCTIONS, INC.

SAMPLER

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